Budget process under scrutiny after ruling

The Student Government Council at the Modesto Maidique Campus Supreme Court passed a ruling on Feb. 4 that could structure the budget allocating process that funds over 60 student organizations and facilities.

The ruling in Ex Parte Velez SC 003 came four days before the start of University-wide Activity & Service fee budget hearings, bringing into question whether or not the events will proceed as scheduled on Feb. 8.

The legality of the process was first questioned by the Coalition for Reform, a student-prepared student political party, through a petition that was heard by SGC-MMC’s Supreme Court on Jan. 27.

The petition called for a review of the A&S budget allocation process by the Student Government’s University-wide Council due to its unconstitutionality, according to Florida Statute chapter 1009.24 (10) (b). Instead it should also be the responsibility of the legislative body to allocate funds.

“We understand the current process to be unlawful and non-compliant with the intent of the state government as to how the A&S fee funds should be allocated,” said William-Jose Velez, CSR president in the petition. “Not only do we believe it appropriate for the directly elected representatives of the students to have a say in the entire budget, but ultimately it is the state law.”

According to the SGA Constitution, the University-wide Council is composed of each campus’ president, vice president, speaker of the senate, comptroller from SGC-MMC and SGC at Biscayne Bay Campus and the speaker pro tempore from SGC-MMC.

The nine members of the University-wide council are responsible for allocating an estimated $13 million of A&S fee monies.

After reviewing the petition, the SGC-MMC Supreme Court ruled in favor of the writ filed by Velez with the decision being released on Feb. 4 at 1:12 a.m.

Because the SGA Constitution states that the Supreme Court has the power to review the A&S budget allocation process by the Student Activity and Service fee monies.

University Health Services diagnoses case of chickenpox on campus

Although, we don’t anticipate major things coming from this, we had to inform the community.

Mariela Gabaroni, Assistant Director University Health Services

“Because the SGA Constitution states that the Supreme Court has the power to review the A&S budget allocation process by the Student Activity and Service fee monies.”

DIJUDICIARY, PAGE 2

Career fairing

The last case of varicella diagnosed on campus was found about a year and a half ago, according to Oscar Loynaz, director of UHS.

“It is unlikely a lot of people have been in contact. We don’t have a high incidence of communicable diseases on the University, but it is important that students know,” said Loynaz.

Varicella spreads through respiratory droplets and skin-to-skin contact. Most people are exposed to the disease as children, and become immune to the virus as a result.

Symptoms include fever, general body aches, headache and a rash with individual lesions appearing as small blisters.

“Although, we don’t anticipate major things coming from this, we had to inform the community,” Gabaroni said.

Julie Ghazi, a junior studying engineering, said, “Many students spend the majority of their time at FIU. Many students live on campus. It’s important that students know.”

Health

Check out Wednesday’s issue for a story about male body image among students by Philippe Buteau.

The Radioactive Underground: 88.1 - 95.3 - 96.9

Tune in to Radiate FM from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Mon., Wed. and Fri. for our Opinion, Sports and News shows.

ONLINE | www.fiusm.com

Follow us on:
Twitter · @FIUSM
Facebook · FIU Student Media: News, FIU Student Media: Sports

IN OUR OPINION

Decision lacks scope of potential implications

A recent decision of the Student Government Council at the Modesto Maidique Campus Supreme Court has called more into question than it intended to answer.

On the morning of Feb. 4, the SGC-MMC court released its decision on a petition made by the Coalition for Student Reform regarding the constitutionality of the University-wide budget allocation process for Student Activity and Service fee monies.

Keep this in mind, we aren’t questioning the wording of the ruling itself and no mention being made of the possible impact and implications that the wording of
Free chickenpox vaccinations made available to students by UHS

---

**SGC-MMC Supreme Court makes ruling without SGC-BBC input**

Pablo Haspel

SGC-BBC Senate Speaker

"We weren’t contacted about the hearing and they should have reached out to SGC-BBC. What this does is it hints at the lack of communication between the councils."
New additions hope to be ready as season approaches

ANTHONY GUIVAS
Staff Writer
sports@fiusm.com

With the season less than a week away, the Panthers are getting ready to start the new campaign with new Head Coach Jake Schumann at the helm.

The girls hit the field on Feb. 2 as Schumann sat in the stands while the girls played a quick scrimmage. Schumann paid close attention.

“We are trying to get to game speed… and since we are eight days away from opening up, we are trying to get as close to game reality as possible,” Schumann said.

Throughout the scrimmage, FIU displayed their two best starting pitchers in Jenn Gniadek and Mariah Dawson. Gniadek showed tremendous presence with her six foot frame, and Dawson continuously continued to hit her spots with ferocious speed.

Now, while the team is set with their pitching, they still have some holes to fill as opening day approaches.

The Panthers still have open spots at catcher and left field and are grooming former outfielder Shelby Graves to first base.

With Graves, the Panthers are fortunate that she isn’t too foreign with first base, as she has played the position before sporadically in high school over in her hometown of California.

“Shebly played first base and pitched in high school… and I think she’s just a little more comfortable at first base, but time will tell to see if she can handle it over there. But she’s one of our better hitters so we have to have her in our lineup,” Schumann said.

Now, while first base seems to be resolved, the same cannot be said about catcher and left field.

While the position is still up for grabs, the team is still assessing players such as Sophomore Rachel Slowik and Sophomore Megan Horne to fill left field and catcher, respectively.

They are still up for grabs. I think if the season started today we would probably have Rachel Slowik in the LF and go with Megan Horne behind the plate. But obviously that can change next week,” Schumann said.

Last season Slowik appeared in 38 games last season, 54 of which she started and posted a .216 average driving in nine games and recording only six at bats in 2011.

One player in particular who has caught Schumann’s attention is FIU’s returning star outfielder Ashley McClain. McClain is returning to FIU after a season which saw her miss limited action last season starting in only nine games and recording only six at bats in 2011.

Deljuan Wright scored nine points and had a team high of 11 rebounds in the Panthers 76-56 victory over the Owls on Feb. 4. This marks the first time since 2009 that the Panthers have defeated the Owls.

Panthers miss last-second shot again, fall to FAU

BRANDON WISE
Asst. Sports Director
brandon.wise@fiusm.com

Eight seconds to go in the game, Head Coach Cindy Russo calls a timeout. The Panthers are down one point, trying to pull off the win on the road at FAU in Boca Raton. Everybody in the arena knows where the ball is going, especially the Owls. Jerica Coley is getting that shot.

“It was a screen at the elbow,” Coley said. “We knew they were going to double, so we just went with a screen and roll, and it just didn’t go.”

In a fashion much similar to the one at U.S. Century Bank Arena on Jan. 21, the Panthers had the ball with a chance to win the game at the end. In fact, it was the exact same score, 50-49.

After Coley put up the shot, it rimmed out but Sasha Melnikova was there for the rebound. Five seconds to go, she drove the ball to the top of the key, where Finda Mansare was there for one more chance.

Her shot was off the mark. Latavia Dempsey got the rebound for the Owls and Coley was forced to foul as the Panthers lost to the Owls 51-49.

After the game, Coley was seen very frustrated, nearly in tears after her performance on Feb. 4. The second leading scorer in the nation was begging for the lid to come off of the rim in the first half, going 0-10 from the field, held to 6-points by the Owls stingy defense.

The second half didn’t start off much better as FAU was up 51-49 at the 12:10 mark that she made her first basket.

Afterwards, there was a huge sigh of relief on her face. Coley finished the night with 12 points though on 4-19 shooting, still reaching double digits as she has done in every game this season for the Panthers.

Even though Coley struggled throughout the game to find her rhythm, the rest of the Panthers found a way to keep themselves in the game, never down more than seven at any point in the game.

Fanni Hutlassa played a big factor in that, scoring a team-high 17 points in the Panthers two-point loss at FAU.

“We still lost. It didn’t really matter,” Hutlassa said. “I was trying to hustle and do what the coaches asked, but apparently it still wasn’t good enough.”

Hutlassa went 7-14 shooting from the field and 3-6 from three point range.

She played much of the second half with four fouls though, not allowing her to be as physical on the defensive side.

With 1.09 to go in the game, Hutlassa committed her final foul meaning the Panthers would have to rely more on Finda Mansare, who also had four fouls, and Tyasia McKinzie, who had not seen substantial minutes all season.

Hutlassa was forced to watch the final play from the bench, but she thinks that the play could have been run a bit slower.

“We started that play too fast,” Hutlassa said. “It was supposed to start at 10 seconds, but we started a bit earlier. I thought it was going in and we got a rebound that could have gone in too.”
receive her second-consecutive NFCA All-South Region First Team honor.  
“I think Ashley McClain, her offensive output and just the way she goes about her business is above and beyond what I’ve worked with before,” Schumann said.

Now with the team having to fill two positions in eight days, they’ve been showing that their pitching is ready to go.

One thing stood out more than anything else was the fact that the team has seemed to make a seamless transition into Schumann’s coaching style.

None of the players have seemed to be pressing as they all looked relaxed and looking forward for the upcoming season.

“From my point of view, I think they have done a great job. We haven’t had much problem doing it,” Schumann said.

So with FIU opening up the season on Feb. 10 against Michigan State, they appear to be set to make 2012 a success.

Marah Dawson (above) along with Jenn Gniadek pitched for the Panthers in a scrimmage.
Medical professors create non-profit to help Haiti

SANDY ZAPATA
Staff Writer
sandyyzapata@fiusm.com

Before the disastrous earthquake that crippled Haiti in 2010, before the world-wide attention it drew, the millions of U.S. professionals who needed to aid Haiti, Dr. Pilar Martin, M.D., M.P.H, and fellow colleagues and students of the International Health Connection had already beat them to the punch.

Michael Melchior, M.P.H., 2008, Ph. D. in Health Promotion, April 2012, and Brian Kunkle, M.P.H, 2005, Ph. D. in Environmental Health, 2011, were the first students who took notice of Martin’s trips to Rose-Mina de Diegue Orphanage in Port-au-Prince.

Melchior recalled his first trip to Haiti and his unawareness of the conditions in a developing nation.

“Every time you see the people in the tent camps and in the shanty towns, it really affects you emotionally because [they are] so close to the U.S. and it’s just poverty everywhere.”

Similarly, Kunkle described his first trip and pointed out the basic environmental advantages in the U.S. that the people of Haiti don’t have access to.

“Just getting clean water is one of the main things you want to have,” said Kunkle.

Kunkle, having previous experience in places like Mexico and Mexico City, described Haiti’s poverty level as being on “a different level.”

Though the trips are five to six days long, the amount of work exerted by the students, professors and volunteers is relentless.

Karlyn Guirand-Emile, M.P.H., recent graduate of the University and editorial board member of IHC, has been visiting Haiti since 2010 with Martin, Kunkle and Melchior.

Once the team arrives in Haiti, they establish a temporary clinic for four to five days and usually see an average of 400 to 500 patients. They provide the patients with medicine, vitamins, parasite treatment, vaccinations and primary care consultations.

Guirand-Emile said the team’s main focus is to treat children with stomach problems because they don’t eat—they can’t,” stated Martin.

The last trip to Haiti was made in November 2011. The group is planning to return this summer. Despite their short trips and dedication, each and every member of this project has paid out of pocket in order to assist in the relief of Haiti.

IHC was founded in 2010 and just received its 501(c)(3) status. The editorial board members are currently working on grant writing and hope to gain donations in the near future to assist with the development of their organization.

The current plan is to develop a permanent location site in Haiti to continue their work.

“When you leave there, you don’t feel that you did enough,” stated Kunkle.

“BIC is a socially responsible organization. Along with Haiti, there are developing sites in Peru and Bolivia.”

Martin, Kunkle, Melchior and Guirand-Emile all emphasize the intake of interest among all students of every major to get involved.

“This is not charity, it is social justice and everybody is responsible to give back.”

Blog offers fresh perspectives

ESRA ERDOGAN
Life! Editor
esra.erdoogan@fiusm.com

With literally thousands to choose from, it is easy to get lost in the blogosphere. Recent graduates Nikki Poey and Cristina Russell noticed there was no Miami-based blog they could read themselves because they were either too clean or too gritty.

After graduating, they took up the task of filling that void with Dear Miamigirl.

“We wanted a space where we could start a dialogue with the girls in our community, where we could share ideas, doodles, music, events and highlight girls doing interesting and innovative things in our city,” said Poey.

On the blog, the creators share playlists and articles they have written, along with features on fashion, music, art and books. Posts range from sharing an opportunity to be in a music video by a local artist and a flyer for a local craft fair, to how to make the most of Art Basel without an art collection.

The blog channels the collective thoughts and interests of young women, which makes Dear Miamigirl interesting for many readers, even if they are not naturally attuned to an indie lifestyle.

The idea for the blog stemmed from Russell and Poey noticing there was no Miami-based blog they could read themselves because they were either too clean or too gritty.

After graduating, they took up the task of filling that void with Dear Miamigirl.

“We were in need for a creative and fun outlet,” said Poey. Since its creation, Dear Miamigirl has gained contributing writers, and the bloggers have attended events as well.

“It’s kind of still getting started; we have lots of ideas and plans for this new year.”

www.dearmiamigirl.com

Nikki Poey [left] and Cristina Russell [right] started the blog “dear miami girl” for and about girls in the greater Miami Area.

www.fiusm.com

Monday, February 6, 2012

The Beacon –  5

GIVING BACK

LIFE!

Blog offers fresh perspectives

ESRA ERDOGAN
Life! Editor
esra.erdoogan@fiusm.com

With literally thousands to choose from, it is easy to get lost in the blogosphere. Recent graduates Nikki Poey and Cristina Russell noticed there was no Miami-based blog they could read themselves because they were either too clean or too gritty.

After graduating, they took up the task of filling that void with Dear Miamigirl.

“We wanted a space where we could start a dialogue with the girls in our community, where we could share ideas, doodles, music, events and highlight girls doing interesting and innovative things in our city,” said Poey.

On the blog, the creators share playlists and articles they have written, along with features on fashion, music, art and books. Posts range from sharing an opportunity to be in a music video by a local artist and a flyer for a local craft fair, to how to make the most of Art Basel without an art collection.

The blog channels the collective thoughts and interests of young women, which makes Dear Miamigirl interesting for many readers, even if they are not naturally attuned to an indie lifestyle.

The idea for the blog stemmed from Russell and Poey noticing there was no Miami-based blog they could read themselves because they were either too clean or too gritty.

After graduating, they took up the task of filling that void with Dear Miamigirl.

“We were in need for a creative and fun outlet,” said Poey. Since its creation, Dear Miamigirl has gained contributing writers, and the bloggers have attended events as well.

“It’s kind of still getting started; we have lots of ideas and plans for this new year.”

www.dearmiamigirl.com

Nikki Poey [left] and Cristina Russell [right] started the blog “dear miami girl” for and about girls in the greater Miami Area.
Study abroad cost worth it

AXIEL GRIFFITH
Contributing Writer
life@fiusm.com

Last year, the University’s study abroad program sent about 650 students overseas. For the executive director of the program, Magdola Hernandez, accomplishing this feat was exciting. She stated, “You have to get that international experience,” and further stressed, “It’s a must!”

However, much work goes on behind the doors of Primera Casa, room 113. Individual student applicants are catered to according to their needs. The program is rather extensive and operates in over 20 different countries.

Belkys Yzquierdo, a current senior double majoring in criminal justice and English, described her experience while visiting the Piazza di San Pietro in Italy during the summer of 2011 as “truly breathtaking.” When asked why she chose this destination, she replied, “I chose Italy because of the book ‘Eat, Pray, Love.’” Gilbert’s book encouraged me to go on an adventure of my own to visit the Piazza di San Pietro. In fact, Hernandez discussed how she and her team were able to find a university in Germany where there was no prior exchange or agreement between them and the University for a student wanting to study in Germany. “We are really here for the students,” said Hernandez.

When asked about which program she thinks would have been her favorite, the assistant director, Suzie Gomez, replied, “I couldn’t pick one or two or three.” For the executive director of the study abroad program, Magnolia Hernandez, everyone is a must!

After my experience, I have learned to appreciate diversity and spontaneity. I have a passion for international education and foreign culture.

Balkys Yzquierdo, Criminal Justice, English Senior

However, she did note that in the packages for the program doesn’t offer something within a students interest, for example, studying medicine in Kiev, Russia, the crew at PC 113 will work to find something outside the program for the student.

In fact, Hernandez discussed how the student program can be tied into your program can be tied into your major or foreign language requirements, financial matters and purchase traveler guides to plan adventures abroad of time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

6 MONDAY

MIDTERM WEEK

12-2013 COUNCIL LEADERSHIP
Applications Available

INFORMATION SESSION “I STAND FOR INTEGRITY” RUSH WEEK
WHEN: 3:30-4:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC GC 305

EMERGENCY MEDICINE INTEREST GROUP
HOST DR. LOU ROMIG
WHEN: 12-1 p.m.
WHERE: MMC AHC2-170

WRITING, EXILE, AND THE LATIN AMERICAN IMAGINATION
WHEN: 7-9 p.m.
WHERE: MMC GC 246

RN TO BSN INFORMATION SESSION
WHEN: 1-3 p.m.
WHERE: MMC AHC3 Room 213

7 TUESDAY

INTEGRITY DISCUSSION “I STAND FOR INTEGRITY” RUSH WEEK
WHEN: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC GC 305

DRESSING FOR SUCCESS: WHAT TO WEAR IN THE LEGAL/BUSINESS WORLD
WHEN: 12:30-1:30 p.m.
WHERE: MMC RB 2008

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT FEATURED EMAIL:
CALENDAR@FIOUSM.COM

Nonetheless, there is no need to be alarmed. Hernandez said that it can be affordable if one plans in advance. That is why she is always interested in helping students.“It can be affordable if one plans in advance. That is why she is always interested in helping students.”

However, she did note that the most expensive is $20,000.”

Most of the study abroad packages are minuscule to the $20,000 price tag; the majority of the packages fall between $1,500 to $7,000.

“Studying abroad enabled me to engage in Dr. (Mark) Rosenberg’s strategic plan for FIU by obtaining an education that is ‘Worlds Ahead.’ After my experience, I have learned to appreciate diversity and spontaneity. I have a passion for international education and foreign cultures ever since I participated in a study abroad program. My experience has led me to leadership opportunities and to broaden my career options,” said Yzquierdo, after being asked how her experience of studying abroad has changed her as a person.

However, before getting excited about studying in distant lands, Yzquierdo also earnestly suggested, “Consider how your program can be tied into your major or foreign language requirements, financial matters and purchase traveler guides to plan adventures abroad of time.”
Susan G. Komen Foundation forgets mission

T he Susan G. Komen For the Cure Foundation’s short-lived decision to end its partnership with Planned Parenthood is illustrative of the common American phenomenon of politicizing women’s health in the name of ideology.

Despite the fact that several days following a social media lambasting of the organization, Komen issued a press release stating it would reverse its new policy so that it would continue to fund Planned Parenthood.

The original move is unforgiveable, and its reversal is insufficient without the immediate firing of the woman who created this controversy.

The only necessary move to cut funding to Planned Parenthood would have resulted in a annual loss of approximately $600,000 to the organization.

It should be clearly noted that the Komen grant money never paid for abortion services or even contraceptive services; the money was solely used for cancer prevention.

Not only was this move wholly incompatible with Komen’s commitment to comprehensive breast care for women of all demographics, but it could have directly affected a particularly vulnerable minority of women who rely on the hundreds of Planned Parenthood clinics across the United States.

As with the cutting of almost all social services, young women, college students, and older women who do not have health insurance would have been most affected by the cuts.

Despite the move being camouflaged in jargon that made for better press releases, and despite the fact Komen maintains the decision was inherently non-political, all facts prove the move was indeed ideological.

The woman behind the attack on Planned Parenthood is Karen Handel, Komen’s new senior vice president for public policy.

In what was a gross capitalization on a health initiative for political momentum and personal beliefs, the anti-choice, anti-Planned Parenthood former gubernatorial candidate from Georgia introduced a new company rule that singled out the organization.

Handel and her board introduced a new “no-investigations” rule for organizations that Komen funds, meaning that if an organization was being investigated by authorities, it was barred from receiving Komen money.

In what is a blatant misunderstanding of health care for political purposes, Planned Parenthood is being investigated by Florida Representative Cliff Stearns, whose inquiry’s stated focus is to ensure no public funds were used for abortion services.

The move was intelligent, strategic, and effective. Under a vague rule, a political agenda could be hidden.

Knowing Planned Parenthood is regularly investigated by political adversaries, Handel and associates knew the enactment of the new rule would exclude Planned Parenthood from crucial dollars.

Handel herself has not given a comment on the ordeal.

She did, however, rewrite and quickly delete this: “Just like a pro-abortion group to turn a cancer org decision into a political bomb to throw. Cry me a freaking river.”

Unprofessional and insensitive, Handel just ousted herself as being wholly guilty of putting her own politics first and women’s health and Komen’s mission second.

For not for the public relations nightmare Handel created, obviously forgetting screen shows live on infinitely, Handel should be fired for her incapability of separating her own ideological agenda from her work.

In short, Handel cares more about politicizing than about preventing breast cancer.

In a video press release to try to quell the controversy and, as she called them, “scurrilous accusations,” the company’s CEO Nancy Brinker stated that the foundation “will never turn our backs on the women who need us the most.”

She is talking in the future tense, but Komen already did turn their backs on the women who needed them the most the second they even considered defunding Planned Parenthood, and then its mission so thoroughly.

It is that it’s nearly impossible to ever get them to see eye to eye with you again.

The thing about turning your back on someone is that it’s nearly impossible to ever get them to see eye to eye with you again.

It is obviously unfortunate that women’s health organizations in the U.S. constantly have to be on the defensive against calculating politicians and anti-choice fanatics.

But, its particularly egregious that an organization would enact a policy that, in practice, is quite possibly the exact antithesis of its own mission statement.

It is a victory that social media and public outcry proved brilliant and caused Komen to reverse its new rule; however, the mere fact that the organization allowed partisanship to overshadow its core mission, even for a fleeting moment, is reprehensible.

The reversal should only be viewed as a partial victory; the public must demand, for the sake of competency and restoration of the credibility and non-partisanship Komen claims to have, that Handel is fired immediately.

Ramifications of decision unaddressed by Court

The ruling may have repercussions that the organization’s CEO Nancy Brinker will not exercise.

According to Article II, Section 2, Subsection B, “persons belonging to SGC-MMC shall not exercise any powers appertaining to SGC-BBC and vice versa.”

Even if the decision of the court were to become constitutional, in writing would negate the current structure of our Student Government.

As it stands, the ruling does not delve into the implications or interpretations of the Supreme Court’s decision - a point emphasized and regarded by the presiding Chief Justice Octavio Mella.

According to Mella, the MMC judiciary should only address things brought before them and not the consequences of its decision. By doing so, we believe that this ruling dangerously allows for open interpretation that ramifications can affect the entire structure of the University’s SGA, which is unique in comparison to all other universities in Florida.

In effect, the ruling was left open-ended that interpretation of Ex Parte Velez, grants SGC-MMC the power to not only hear judicial matters, but also legislate on U-Wide issues instead be hidden.

Because the ruling grants the power of BBC judicial review and legislation to SGC-MMC, it can be argued that SGC-MMC is now SGA, doing away with the campus specific council at BBC.

However, the dissolution of SGC-BBC, although it affects the more than 7,000 students who attend BBC, isn’t what will have the most immediate impact. The more pressing issue at hand is the impact that this ruling will have on the Activities and Service Fee Budget Hearings and Deliberations that are currently scheduled to commence on Feb. 8.

The A&S Fee Budget Hearings and Deliberations decide on the allocation of $13 million for over 60 student facilities and organizations.

Prior to this ruling, the University Wide Council that presided over said hearings and deliberations consisted of each campus’ president, vice president, speaker of the senate, comptroller and the speaker pro tempore from SGC-MMC.

Yet the ruling can be interpreted to be saying that since there is no more SGC-BBC, the U-wide council can only be made up of members from SGC-MMC, since BBC no longer has any active governing bodies. This will leave BBC under represented, or misrepresented, come budget hearings and deliberations.

Bearing the weight of this decision, we believe that the A&S budgeting process should be postponed due to the lackluster effort the SGC-MMC Supreme Court put forth in their ruling of Ex Parte Velez, until a reasonable solution to the matter at hand is found.

Although this ruling is in violation of the SGA Constitution, it stands as law until it is contested in the only remaining supreme court at the University, SGC-MMC’s.

By MMC’s Chief Justice going on the record as saying that the SGC-MMC Supreme Court should not delve into the implications of the case, the Supreme Court at MMC is contradicting the very nature of the federal judiciary system.

By simply googling a Federal Supreme Court decision, say Roe v. Wade, Mella and his associate justices would have realized that when making a ruling all angles should be covered to leave as little room for interpretation as possible.

Ex Parte Velez is a clear example of not only SGC-MMC’s Supreme Court not being familiar with their own Constitution, but also not under, standing the function that a Judicial Branch of a governing council serves.

Send Us Your Letters

E-mail us at brooklyn.middleton@fiusm.com.

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of The Beacon Editorial Board. These views are variegated from the editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

Disclaimer

No material written for this publication may be reproduced in any part without the written permission of the author or the Editor in Chief.

Copyright © 2012 The Beacon.
Student in the dark works hard and believes in self

KATHERINE MAS
Contributing Writer
bbc@fiusm.com

Waking up in the morning, picking out clothes, choosing a seat in class, buying chips from a vending machine or walking with friends to classes are simple tasks that require little thought for the average college student. For Rayvn Richards, they aren’t that simple.

Walking in the dark is definitely a challenge for current senior and sociology major, Richards, who is blind.

Richards was born a healthy boy with his sight in tact until the day he was shot at the age of 17. His other senses were partially impaired. His taste diminished and his hearing is not enhanced as other people and my other senses were partially impaired. His taste diminished and his hearing is not enhanced as other people and my other senses were partially impaired.

This disability hasn’t stopped him from pursuing his dreams. He is currently taking classes this spring with help from the Disability Resource Center, Public Safety, and friendly classmates such as Santiago Depez, who met him this semester and accompanied Richards after just finishing a class one late afternoon to catch his special transportation.

He described his experience as a student as “okay,” considering his impairment. He uses a long walking stick to help him feel around the area where he walks and assistance from friends and classmates are essential to get around campus.

When in class, Richards uses a voice recorder to document lectures. At home he scans his papers using JAWS, a Microsoft Windows program that reads information on your screen using synthesized speech.

It makes it easier to use programs, edit documents, and read Web pages. It can also provide braille output in addition to, or instead of, speech. These tools make studying easier for students who have lost their vision and have limited resources.

For Richards, it is difficult to use braille since he has thick fingers and when brushing over each symbol alone or combined with others can mean a wide variety of things. Braille is a system of reading and writing that allows people who are blind to communicate effectively.

Although some might consider these obstacles, Richards shows no signs of backing away from reaching his goals.

In regards to other students who share the same impairment or disability, Richards said, “You can complain and moan about your problems but it won’t change the fact that you have them. Instead work hard and believe in yourself.”

Richards is just one of the many brave students that strive to better themselves. According to statistics obtained through the Little Rock Foundation, 93,600 U.S. students are visually impaired or blind.

For students with low vision, a Closed Caption Television (CCTV) is used to enlarge hard copy documents or textbooks. This aids the student in accessing any of their necessary tools for reading.

For blind students, the center works with publishing companies to provide them with audio or digital versions with audio. If the student can read braille, they have the technology available.

“Students who are blind have an impressive ability to approach each situation with optimism and determination,” said Joanna Lindsey, Disability Specialist. “Everyday I am inspired and challenged to assistance through their academic journey.”

Katherine Mas/THE BAY

Students can’t help but rant about the lack of reception

LIZSANDRA TRASTOY
Contributing Writer
bbc@fiusm.com

The battle for cell phone reception at Biscayne Bay Campus remains a day to day struggle for some students at Biscayne Bay Campus. Students demand cell phone reception for daily social interaction. Usage may also pertain to access to Internet and email while on campus.

Goldie James, sophomore Hospitality and Tourism Management major recently changed cell phone carriers from T-mobile to Sprint because she believes T-mobile delivers poor service on campus.

“Cell phone reception is very limited here at Biscayne Bay Campus. If I had no reception, I would go to any office and ask a clerk for a phone,” James said.

In emergency situations, students would need to step outside and further away from the building. Yet, at the Modesto Maidique Campus, cell phone reception problems are virtually non-existent.

“I sometimes find missed calls and emails at the library and in every corner because of poor reception,” Carol Casimyr, a senior in the civil engineering program said. “I would [need to] find a computer and I would use email as a way of communicating.”

Biscayne Bay Campus’ problem with cell phone reception is a problem, however, does not apply to all students with different cell phone carriers.

Some students like Christina Yidi, a sophomore student majoring in Biology, has no issues with the cell phone reception at BBC.

“I’ve heard Verizon is the best, yet my family has AT&T and it’s really good in reception.”

Madison Moreno, a sophomore student majoring in public relations, believes the lack of cell phone reception is on purpose.

“I’ve heard that most schools do it on purpose. It’s a cell phone block in reception in order to prevent students from using their cell phones in class,” Moreno said.

According to the Chair of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Dr. Shekibur Bhanasali, the reason BBC may have an issue providing decent cell phone reception relates to the building’s physical structure.

“The problem with cell phone signal at the campus is due to the iron and metal in the buildings, and that’s when shielding happens,” said Bhanasali. “No one likes to put antennas inside of a building.”

“Shielding” refers to a barrier that blocks the signal.

“The middle of the building is called a dead zone. A dead zone means there is no signal,” Bhanasali said. “I would doubt it’s a problem with cell phone companies.”

Although some phone companies may be superior to others in signal, if the problem with reception persists, students can find reception by leaving the Academic One and Two for the Hubert Library and other areas around the main buildings.