Science Café lecture series targets complex issues

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Making science understandable is the main goal of the Science Café, an initiative of open lectures by the University’s Quantifying Biology in the Classroom program, which took place for last time this semester on April 14 in Coral Gables.

“The Science Café is a lot of work. We spend a lot of time explaining what most people turn away from, but feedback has been great,” said Anna Goldina, visiting instructor of biology.

The Science Café, a lecture series by a year-long course in the QBIC, was designed to spark interest in complex scientific topics.

The QBIC program at FIU decided to follow the idea of teaching scientific issues in an informal and open setting, a concept started in 1998 by Duncan Dallas, in the city of Leeds, United Kingdom.

In previous sessions, the Science Café and QBIC have had lectures focusing on healthy eating habits, cancer and stem cells, which featured Harvard University’s Matthew William Lenzch.

The topics of the Science Café sessions were selected through a survey of the scientific interests of 210 people.

In its fourth and final lecture of the semester, Science Café students took the time to teach the basics of alternative energy to children at the farmers market by the Coral Gables Museum.

“The biggest problem is explaining things to children because generally we tend to go in depth. It’s a bit of a challenge to explain things in a simple way, but it’s satisfying,” said Danny Lampuy, a senior QBIC student.

The students set up a booth with conceptual models of wind and thermal methods of energy production.

“The children like playing with the project; however, they all come out thinking it takes a lot of work to generate voltage,” said James Rouc, a QBIC student who designed a representation of how energy is made.

“The concept is made more real. They learn how much it takes to power a PlayStation.”

Another topic covered by the students was the basics of oil scarcity, explained with beans to represent extraction over the past 100 years.

“My kids liked gathering around the oil section. It is a nice representation of the problem of oil and it is good way to demonstrate it,” said Katherine Fullerton.

“I learned about oil, and how they use it. I liked it a lot,” said Margo McGuire, Fullerton’s daughter.

‘Talk-Tank’ challenges community in social experiment

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University students, high school students and community leaders came together for a “Talk-Tank” on April 12, with the goal of building a social habitat.

Talk-Tank: A Community Conversation, presented by FIU’s Communication Arts Department, was an intensive planning session to collaborate on a vision for the development of an ideal community.

The event was based off of the World Café organizational workshop, which aimed to provide an open and creative conversation on any topic to use their collective knowledge, share ideas, and gain a better understanding of the subject and the issues involved in said topic.

The participants included FIU students and faculty, Mater Academy students, South Florida community and business leaders and clients and activists of the Miami Coalition for the Homeless.

“The idea was to bring in different stake holders involved in the Miami community to talk about how to design Miami,” said Daniel Blanauer, assistant professor of Communication Arts and advisor of the FIU Debate Team.

According to Joann Brown, chair of the Communication Arts Department, “This year, the National Communication Association determined that the 2012 discussion was to be on the community.”

The main question asked at the start of the event was, “what is the ideal community?”

“We decided to get individuals together of various backgrounds to discuss their views on what they think is the best way to build an ideal community,” said Joann Brown.

Jonathan Pardo, a Political Science major at FIU, brain storming with others to figure out what was their ideal community.

Hello Pitino

Richard Pitino has agreed to a five-year deal worth $1.25 million to become the head coach of the FIU men’s basketball team. The hire makes the 29-year-old the third youngest current head coach in the NCAA Division I basketball.
NATIONAL

Romney taps longtime adviser to head VP search

Mitt Romney has tapped a longtime adviser to begin his search for a vice presidential candidate.

Romney said Monday that Beth Myers is in charge of “selection and vetting and analysis.”

“I have selected someone who has been a counselor of mine for a number of years, Beth Myers. She was my chief of staff when I was governor,” Romney said during an interview with Diane Sawyer of ABC News outside Fenway Park in Boston.

Romney is moving forward as the presumptive Republican presidential nominee after rival Rick Santorum suspended his campaign last week. Myers was Romney’s chief of staff when he was Massachusetts governor. Currently she is a senior adviser on his presidential campaign.

When asked about Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, Romney said “he’s one of the terrific leaders in our party.”

“...I think it’s way too early to begin narrowing down who the potential vice presidential nominees might be,” he said. “But we’re beginning that process, we’ll talk about a lot of folks, and then go through the kind of vetting and review process that you have to go through to make sure whoever you select will pass the evaluation that’s required by the American people.”

— Compiled by Melhor Leonor

FRESH LOOK

Va. Tech marks 5 years since shooting

Students were headed to class Monday at Virginia Tech, the first year the school hasn’t had a scheduled instruction to mark the anniversary of a 2007 rampage that left 32 people and the gunman dead.

The massacre was the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

Provost Mark McNamee, who chaired a committee that planned memorial events in the years after the shooting, said the return to classes reflects the lives of those slain.

“Their passion for education, their desire to do good in the world, their commitment to their disciplines come through so strongly that we felt being in classes was one special way of remembering them onward,” McNamee said.

“This is what they did, this is what we do, and it’s important to us. “My sense is that our students and our faculty are ready for it,” he said.

The day will be remembered in other ways on the Blacksburg campus, in Washington, and by alumni across the country.

Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell was scheduled to address a campus-wide candlelight vigil on the Drillfield, the heart of the campus. McDonnell has issued a proclamation recognizing April 16 as Virginia Tech Remembrance Day.

The proclamation honors the 32 lives that were “hastily taken, leaving absences that will never be filled and a profound sense of sorrow in the lives of those impacted,” the proclamation reads in part.

At 9:43 a.m. Monday — the time when gunman Seung-Hui Cho began killing 30 students and professors at Norris Hall — McDonnell was calling for a moment of silence in Virginia. The Capitol Square Bell Tower in Richmond will then toll for each victim.

On campus, events will also include a community picnic on the Drillfield, a display of memorial items sent to Virginia Tech from other colleges and universities and performances. Several locations have been set aside on campus as “quiet places for reflection.”

At Norris Hall, where Cho also killed himself, an open house was scheduled. The former classroom building is now home to the Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention.

The center was established after the killings at Norris Hall in 2009 “to transform a place of pain, suffering and violence that can prevent future violence,” director James Heselden said.
**MEN’S BASKETBALL**

**Pitino agrees on five-year deal to be new head coach**

**IGOR MELLO AND MALCOLM SHIELDS**

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After an up and down week in the men’s basketball program with the firing of Isiah Thomas, Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia has found his new coach. Richard Pitino has agreed to a five-year deal worth $1.25 million to become the head coach of the FIU men’s basketball team.

Pitino, 29, will be taking a slight pay cut from his $275,000 base salary as an assistant to take his first head coaching job in Division-I basketball. The hire makes him the third youngest head coach in the NCAA Division-I basketball and the seventh head coach in FIU men’s basketball history.

The school introduced Pitino on April 16 during a press conference at U.S. Century Bank Arena.

"It’s been a dream of mine," said Pitino. "I’m prepared to do this job. People always say I’m young and I tell them I may be young but I am experienced."

Pitino was an associate coach with the University of Louisville last season under his father, Rick Pitino. Under his father’s wing, the Cardinals reached the Final Four where they were eliminated by eventual champion Kentucky.

"I was at the Final Four and I didn’t hold the Final Four results against coach Pitino. But I did make contact with him about Tuesday (April 10) of last week," Garcia said.

Pitino’s coaching career began in 2005 after graduating from Providence College. Pitino has had coaching stops at Duquesne University, the University of Florida and Northeastern University.

While at the University of Florida, Pitino played a role in assisting the Gators from 2009-2011 in two NCAA tournament appearances and an Elite-Eight finish in 2011.

“I won’t hold that against him,” Garcia joked about Pitino’s stint with the Gators.

While at Louisville, Pitino played a role in recruiting and creating scouting reports for his father. Pitino was credited with assisting the Cardinals in obtaining some of the top recruiting classes in the nation to play in Louisville.

His ability to connect with players and recruits will be tested as more than half of the current players on the roster have requested to be released after the firing of Thomas on April 6. The status of the 2012 recruiting class is uncertain as many of the...
McClain breaks school’s all-time home run record

ANTHONY GUIVAS
Staff Writer

FIU has a new all-time softball home run leader and her name is Ashley McClain.

After splitting the first two games of a three-game series against Western Kentucky, the Panthers jumped over the hill defeating the Hilltoppers in the rubber game 9-5 on April 15.

The Panthers propelled to the second place in the conference, two games of two historic home runs by McClain. McClain tied Kim Rodriguez and Monique White with her 32nd home run and then broke the school’s all-time softball home run record with her 33rd home run.

McClain, who is the reigning 2011 Sun Belt Player of the Year, solidifies herself as FIU’s all-time leader in home runs, RBIs, doubles, total bases and batting average. McClain also passed Stephanie Wolfer for second all-time in home runs with 244 and is only 23 hits shy of first place, held by Jennifer Owens who has 267.

McClain had three runs batted in to complement her two-home run day. Jennifer Alfonso and Briana Rojas joined McClain’s party as they each knocked in a home run.

The Panthers solely depended on the home run ball as FIU delivered a season-high four round trippers in the game.

On the mound, both starters for FIU and WKU got off to shaky starts. Mariah Dawson withstood two innings of work, giving up five runs, three of which were earned. For the Panthers, Jenn Gniadek took the reins and never looked back, allowing only one run on four hits through five innings of work, earning her sixth win of the season.

Offensively, Rojas opened things up in the first with a three run blast, handing the team an early lead. That lead was then quickly erased as WKU put up three in the bottom half.

FIU then went yard two more times in the second inning. But this time it was Alfonso and McClain who hit back-to-back home runs, putting the Panthers up 7-3.

WKU inched closer with runs in the bottom of the second and third, cutting the FIU lead to 7-5.

But McClain hit her second home run of the game, this time a two-run shot in sixth inning, solidifying the FIU win.

With the win, the Panthers sit in third place, only one game behind South Alabama for second. The Jaguars are riding on a three-game winning streak, while defending conference champion Louisiana has complete control of first place in the Sun Belt.

R.J. Fondon’s fifth win puts FIU in a tie for third in the SBC

MEN’S, PAGE 3

recruits were tied to the program with the intentions of playing for Thomas.

“They have to get to know me. They’re not going to going to just want to play for me without even knowing me. So the most important thing for me these couple of days is to be around these guys as much as possible. They’re going to have to get to know a little bit about me and I certainly understand that. I’m confident that I can do that,” Pitino said. “It’s hard for me to tell you how I can get them to stay. For some guys it will be a good fit, for some others it may not be a good fit. At the end of the day that is my job to figure out what they want.”

Pitino will have to repair the relationships of disgruntled players like Dominic Ferguson, who has had the appeal for the release of his scholarship denied by the university on April 13. Ferguson has vowed to never play for FIU again.

“Our interest is for the players to stay here and get their degrees, there is an appeal process on everything that goes on,” Garcia said.

Pitino will inherit a program that has gone through 12 consecutive losing seasons. Pitino, though, has had some experience in being a part of a rebuilding process of a basketball program. While at Duquesne, he was on the staff that saw the Dukes improve their number of wins to double digits in 2006 and helped lead Northeastern to a 19 win season in 2005.

He hire goes along the lines of other hires that Garcia has made to other sports programs at FIU since he was named athletic director in 2006. Beginning with Mario Cristobal and Turtle Thomas, both were known for their ability to recruit talent. Pitino will be tasked to build a basketball program that has not had a winning season since the 1999-2000 season.

When asked about his father, Pitino joked about the possibility of playing him in the future.

“It’s probably not going to be a daydream. It will be a nightmare. He texted me and said, ‘I never got to spank you as a child, would you like to get a spanking this year?’ I told him to bring it on,” said Pitino.

JASON SIMON/THE BEACON

Ashley McClain (above) hit two homer runs against Western Kentucky, giving her 33 for her career at FIU.
The applied techniques and knowledge received from the staff members and the students’ professor has truly paid off. The goal of introducing a piece of art and having it infuse your senses was conquered by all the student artists of the University.

The exhibit will run through April 21, 2012 at the Buena Vista Building, located at 180 NE 39 Street and NE 2nd Avenue in Miami.

“It’s not just a gallery, it’s more of an experience.”
—Violet Forrest

HAUTE TOPIC

Denim shorts, tees and jewelry are summer staples

Since summer clothes are so basic, it makes sense to spend a teeny bit more so you can count on the piece next year. Denim shorts, gauzy tops and sandals will never go out of style...

Stay away from frayed styles; they end up shedding very quickly and lose their original shape, especially if they have a lot of holes to begin with. Instead, stick with basic shorts with a short cuff and back pockets. Dress them up with neon, leather or patent belts. With the recent crop top trend, your waist can show and a skinny belt adds a lot of personality to a plain pair of shorts.

As for footwear, you can’t go wrong with a pair of leather gladiators. I’m still not over them. I’ve seen a lot of gladiator-like styles in major department stores. Buy genuine leather so they don’t break and since you only need one or two pairs, you’ll definitely get the cost-per-wear down pretty low by the end of summer. A better quality shoe will also last you through fall and probably next year’s season as well. I’ve also been obsessed with getting a pair of suede ankle boots in taupe. Please don’t ask me why. I guess I really wanted to go to Coachella.

If you’re still lacking inspiration, visit Australian blogger Genev’s site at http://apair-andaspare.blogspot.com/. Not only does her blog have major summer style eye candy, but her DIY tutorials are cheap and original; they take on a lot of designer-inspired pieces.

HAUTE TOPIC is a weekly fashion column. Ezra Erdogan is graduating this spring. The fashion column will be continued by columnist Vanessa Paredes.
Sometimes, an album leaves fans divided. "Open Your Heart" bridges the gap by providing instant gratification and contemplative measuring.

The album offers powerful, relentless rock riffs and atmospheric, submersible art that shows a band that is more than just revitalized punk rock.

To juxtapose the old and new, "Open Your Heart" starts off with a track titled "Turn It Around," in which a catchy guitar lick chugs through distortion, screechy solos and throbbing drums with jet-like propulsion. "Animal" carries the same amplitude as Chris Hansell shouts "I'm an animal." It's apropos, being that the sheer ferociousness of the song roars as loud as the guitars. What I love most, or what is most endearing to me, is that they don't try to sound like a punk band or copy and paste the best parts of the Stooges, Ramones and Sebadoh and call it "original" music. The Men's sound is one that has already been established, especially from the hodgepodge of indie rock acts called New York. To call their location "eclectic" would be an understatement and to call them a punk rock band doesn't fit their brand of rock aply. In a good way, all breaks apart in "Country Song" as the chaos of the former tracks is suspended with a flowing piece of reverbed guitars that are calmly paced and lucid. A cacophony of guitars swell up in "Oscillation." The guitars gather momentum continuously as to recreate one of those organic Sonic Youth epic jams.

It's the garage rock aesthetic that suits The Men so well; they are not only able to deliver the noise in full force but they also obtain this nostalgic fervor in their music that makes you think back about your own aspirations of being in a raucous rock band.

That feeling comes through with "Please Don't Go Away," a song full of bowing of "oh's."

The words "please don't go away" are interspersed throughout the melodic fixture of guitars that drive the song.

Mixed in with the twang of songs like "Country Song" and "Presence" that remove the calamity of guitar squalls with acoustic plucking and droning, "Open Your Heart" plants all the seeds of an album with excellent composition and direction.

It could leave some listeners feeling indifferent or alienated by the album's attempt to bring the "rock" band into "indie rock," but The Men aren't pushing away this arbitrary notion of becoming new pioneers in modern punk, such as The Strokes in the early 2000's.

The Men's method seems to be more organic and it shows in their music. The album is full of vibrant energy and a vision that The Men have created.

Radiate Reviews is a weekly music review column.
Community college proven beneficial

Transfer students are sometimes stigmatized since they attended community college rather than entering a four-year institution right after high school. However, I would like to think of them as fantastic students.

The reasons for attending community college first are varied, but the most prevalent one is the economic advantage. Community college tuition tends to be much cheaper than its four-year counterpart.

In essence, these students saved over $5,678 while getting equal education over a two year period.

Furthermore, the University’s acceptance rate is just under 40 percent, stated University President Mark B. Rosenbaum’s goal of making the University more selective will likely cause that acceptance rate to drop even further.

Meanwhile, Miami Dade College’s average full-time student only pays $3,074, according to collegeboard.com.  

An article in The New York Times profiled several students who, after attending community college, are now attending highly selective schools such as New York University, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Stanford University and others, some as graduate students.

Many of these students cited that attending community college afforded them some of the benefits listed above, in addition to a relaxed environment where they could achieve the high GPA necessary to enter their respective dream schools.

To all of the transfer students: well played. Unlike the rest of us who turned up our noses at the thought of going to community college, thinking of it as a sign of failure, you used it to your advantage.

Not only did you save thousands of dollars, you also secured a seamless transfer into the University. After all, the name of the school on your diploma is ultimately all that matters, but for the sake of the democratic ideals upon which our society is based on.
**Professor stresses the need to ‘knock on every door’**

Juliet Pinto, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, gives her students one particular piece of advice she wants them to remember.

“Knock on every door. Don’t limit yourself, believe in yourself and your abilities.”

This advice reflects Pinto’s personality.

Throughout her life, Pinto has knocked on doors in almost every country in Central and South America and has explored the academic studies of sciences and humanities.

Pinto started her academic career at Boston University as a physical therapy major. She decided to change her major to environmental science because she “was fascinated by the mechanisms in natural systems, and how humans fit into those equations.”

For her master’s, Pinto continued in the science field and acquired a degree in marine and coastal affairs. Even though Pinto did not know Spanish at that time, she moved to Chile to finish her master’s degree.

“They did not ask me if I could speak Spanish, and I did not mention that I couldn’t,” she said.

During her stay in Chile, Pinto worked with fishermen on aquaculture projects that were associated with changes related to a fisheries management law being implemented in the country.

“I chose that program because it had a blend of the natural science with policy and social science, which is how I envisioned the blend of looking at humans and natural systems,” Pinto said.

Pinto believes that a combination of two environmental science degrees, good writing skills and some luck was what gave her a job as a travel writer for the RECOMMEND magazine, part of Worth International Publishing. For two years, she traveled around Central and South America and wrote articles directed to the business travel industry.

“I loved traveling in South America,” Pinto said. “There are too many favorites to say. But one of my favorite cities has to be Buenos Aires. Part of it is because of having family and friends there, part of it is the fact that it is such a city of neighborhoods, like New York, London, and other areas with very strong senses of neighborhoods and communities.”

Pinto then began on a road in the field of communications that has led her to FIU.

When Pinto decided to start her doctorate degree, she made the decision to switch from the scientific role and believe in their potentials. She encourages students to engage in this essential journalistic role and believe in their potentials.

A free press functioning in the public interest is an essential component to the proper functioning of a democracy, she said. “We need journalists to provide us with accurate, important information.”

Barbara Calne and Jackie Pina, all juniors and international relations majors, a scale model of the traveling rainbow memorial. The memorial celebrates the lives of gay people who were killed because of their sexual orientation.

Scott Hall, president and founder of the Gay American Heroes Foundation, shows Dallielle Caputo.

**A night on the bay for some kayak fun**

Andres Bedoya

Imagine the Biscayne Bay Campus waters at night.

Now imagine ten kayaks going through it at 7 p.m. on April 20.

On “Night Kayaking,” co-sponsored by Red Bull and the BBC Rec Center, will be bringing out twenty students who have registered for the event to go around Sandspur Island in groups of two’s, followed by a movie showing. According to Jonathan Torrey, departmental administrator of Campus recreation, everyone must have a partner to kayak.

Torrey suggests comfortable shirts and shorts that students don’t mind getting wet. Paddles and lifejackets will be provided. Torrey and two other lifeguards will be present and the kayaks will have navigational lights to make the kayakers’ journey safer and easier.

The trip around Sandspur Island, according to Torrey, takes between an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes.

No more spots are available for the “Night Kayaking” trip, but the night isn’t over then.

Red Bull media house, the center of the global Red Bull media network across media channels and products, will also present the movie, Halo Effect at 9 p.m. The movie documents the journeys of extreme kayakers. Red Bull, popcorn, s’mores and water will be offered.

“The recreational component is very much so needed,” Torrey said. “So students have a place and an opportunity to stay fit and gain knowledge of activities on campus.”

**GAY PRIDE**