Media coverage of shootings sparks debate

CONSEJLO NARANJO
Staff Writer

Helplessness, tears, faces of despair paint the picture of 16 mass shootings last year in the United States, which became viral news in social media around the world.

From Feb. 22 to Dec. 14, 2012, mass shootings around the country left a total of 88 dead and hundreds injured, including children, according to George Zornick, a writer for The Nation.

One week after the tragedy in Newtown, Conn., CEO of the National Rifle Association, Wayne LaPierre, expressed his absolute support for the gun industry.

“The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun,” said LaPierre.

His speech fired up the minds of those who believe that his idea of increasing the distribution of arms to protect private and public services around the country is just a justification to increase production in the gun industry, and it will just open doors for more crimes.

People across the country have begun to speak out and share their opinion both for and against guns. They have started to take to the streets and petition for more and less gun control.

Regan Kramer, FIU Wesley Campus Ministry staff, supports the idea of strict gun regulations.

“In some European countries, it’s hard to obtain a firearm; for instance, statistics have shown less crime and deaths,” said Kramer.

“We have to find the root of the problem. More guns in our society are just a representation of increasing danger for our kids and loved ones,” said Susana Benitez, a grandmother of an eight and six years old children.

Additionally, La Piere described media, music, celebrities and videogames as violence promoters. “There are blood-soaked slasher films like ‘American Psycho’ and ‘Natural Born Killers’ that are aired like propaganda loops on ‘Splatertubes,’” he said.

According to the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ 2009 publication, in the U.S., children between the ages of 8 to 18 years old spend an average of six hours and 21 minutes each day using electronic or print entertainment media. Prolonged exposure to such media can cause physical and mental issues in the child, such as tendency to obesity and violent behavior.

Petition launched to expand University’s finance program

JACKIE ROSADO
Staff Writer

The University’s accounting association, Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, has launched a petition that aims to get the University to offer more classes for its finance students.

According to the ALPFA’s president, Martin Falconi, the association is the largest business organization in the University and one of the leading chapters in the nation. It helps students transition into the business world by helping them find a job or internship. They work with finance, accounting, business and Management Information Systems majors.

The organization holds workshops that help finance students develop the skills necessary to enter the workforce and develop into leaders.

Every Friday, ALPFA brings in accounting and business firms from the Fortune 500 to promote themselves and the internship/job opportunities they have to offer.

The Fortune 500 is the annual ranking of America’s largest corporations, such as Wal-Mart, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and General Motors.

Finance students are only required to take two basic accounting classes, according to Falconi, while other universities across the U.S. offer three to five courses to choose from.

That is one of the obstacles FIU’s finance students come across when they participate in ALPFA’s career fairs.

“After seeing different recruiters tell us there is a requirement of 12 to 18 accounting credits a finance student needs in order to qualify for internships and top firms, we acted by asking that the University offer more classes for its finance students so they can meet that requirement,” said Falconi.

The classes that ALPFA wants the University to offer include: cost accounting, financial accounting, tax accounting, and financial statement analysis.

Norbert Esquivel, a senior and a member of ALPFA, understands the purpose of the petition and how it will benefit the students.

“As a member of ALPFA, I understand the predicament that my fellow finance majors are going through. They deserve to have the same opportunities as us,” said Esquivel. “Being an accounting and finance major, this really does not affect me, but for others it isn’t fair that they go through a rigorous course load to end up not getting the proper job offers.”

ALPFA spoke with and gained support from the dean of College of Business, David R. Klock. They still need support from faculty to then take it to the FIU Board of Trustees to be evaluated, which is their next goal.

“I think this is something great that ALPFA has to contribute to the University. It may not affect me directly, but I do support it. More is always better than less, and offering extra classes to the University’s students is definitely something to support,” said Maureen Gonzalez, a junior majoring in accounting.

The College of Business
Don’t be surprised if some people assume the 2013 Chevrolet Spark is another newfangled electric car. Just 12 feet long and with an aerodynamic front end and abruptly chopped-off rear, the South Korean-built Spark could pass for an electric car.

But there’s no plug and no problem with fueling the 2013 version of this Chevrolet, because it comes with a gasoline-fueled engine, internal combustion, four-cylinder engine. (An electric Spark is planned for 2014.)

While the 2013 Spark doesn’t rival the government’s fuel economy numbers of electric cars, its top government mileage rating of 32 miles per gallon in city driving and 38 mpg on the highway for a manual transmission model put it ahead of many competitors.

For example, the best government mileage rating for the 2013 Honda Fit hatchback, which is similarly sized to the Spark, is 27/33 mpg with manual transmission. Also of note: The Spark can come with high-tech features such as smartphone integrated navigation, Pandora personalized Internet radio, Stitcher Internet radio news casts and Bluetooth audio streaming.

New for 2013, the five-door Spark hatchback also is Chevy’s only subcompact car and carries the lowest starting retail price of the brand.

Starting manufacturer’s suggested retail price, including destination charge, is $12,995 for a base 2013 Spark LS with five-speed manual transmission and 84-horsepower four cylinder.

The lowest starting retail price pact car and carries the lowest starting retail price of the brand.

Starting manufacturer’s suggested retail price, including destination charge, is $12,995 for a base 2013 Spark LS with five-speed manual transmission and 84-horsepower four cylinder. This compares with the $13,295 for a 2013 Ford Fiesta SFE model.

The 2013 Ford Fiesta hatchback starts at $14,995 with 120-horsepower four cylinder and manual transmission and $16,990 with automatic. Top fuel mileage is 29/40 mpg for the 2013 Fiesta SFE model.

Chevy’s Spark has seats for four, with a low, plastic area with two exposed cupholders positioned between the two rear seats. It’s actually not apparent, at first, that there are two rear doors for access to these seats.

This is because the doors sit nearly seamlessly into the side of the Spark, and exposed cupholders positioned between the two rear seats.

Room in these flat-cushioned back seats isn’t as bad as feared. There’s a full 37.3-inches of headroom in the back seat and more than 35 inches of legroom.

This compares with 37.2 inches of headroom and just 31.2 inches of legroom in the back seat of a Fiat 500 hatchback.

Dealers still carry the 2013 Ford Fiesta hatchback, which comes standard with a front passenger knee air bag, which the test car did not have.

A plus: Rear-door windows go down nearly all the way. All Spark seats are either cloth or leatherette, and the latter decently mimics the look and feel of a lower-class leather. Overall, the somewhat barebones nature of the Spark interior is handled with class.

With a pod of gauges seemingly hung on the steering column in front of the driver — and they move up and down when the steering wheel tilt is adjusted — there is an expansive plastic dash board in front of the driver.

Yet, this area doesn’t look boring or low-cost, thanks to styling lines that sweep out toward the windshield and nicely textured plastic. Even the ceiling material is textured. The well-sized, 7-inch display screen that was in the middle of the center stack in the top-of-the-line test Spark 2LT had big, easily readable numbers to make navigation maps easy to see and use.

But there’s no cover for storage small items anywhere in the Spark except in the glovebox, which doesn’t have a lock.

There’s also no tactile feedback when using the display screen buttons.

Cargo space, with back seats in use, is a mere 11.4 cubic feet, which is less than the average of a small sedan like a Toyota Corolla.

But there’s a more accommodating 31.2 cubic feet in the Spark when split rear seatbacks are folded down.

The ride in the Spark can feel Spartan. The test car hit its bump stops a few times on city street bumbs, sending a quick jarring sensation to passengers.

The 15-inch tires gripped to their limits quickly, and the lightweight, 2,296-pound Spark was buffeted one way and another on windy days.

Passengers heard wind and road noise, and the little, 1.2-liter, dual overhead cam four cylinder roared when pressured to deliver power.

The fuel-efficient nature of this powerhouse was quickly apparent during testing. With a peak torque is just 83 foot-pounds of 4,200 rpm. This compares with the more spunky Fiesta’s 112 foot-pounds of torque at 5,000 rpm.

But the fuel mileage was genuine. In nearly all city driving — and it wasn’t gentle driving — the Spark tester averaged 29.4 mpg, which is better than the government estimate. A full tank of unleaded gasoline, therefore, could have lasted for 270 miles and cost under $30 at today’s prices.

A couple nits: The driver seat had a clunky knob to crank to raise seat cushion height, and there was no grab handle for the rear window on the back window is small and just doesn’t clear the whole view.

There are no crash test ratings yet for the Spark, that was designed with electronic stability control, traction control and 10 air bags, including bags mounted to the sides of the back seats.  

ALPFA, PAGE 1

was unavailable for comment as of print time.

Falconi said the organization is currently working on building support to add more courses.

The petition is called FIU College of Business CSO Club Fair. Participants earned a free lunch from Panera.
Professors: An Unused Resource

MICHAE BAISDEN
Opinion Editor

Frustration occurs in everyday life. Students struggle with class material and search for a place to go to for answers. So many times, they turn to Google, or ask a friend, or in the rarest of occasions, turn to a book.

But many students neglect a resource right in front of them many hours in the week.

A professor, that individual talking endlessly about the subject that doesn’t truly hold your interest, is what some people may call an expert on the matter.

Professors make themselves available to students consistently in the hours outlined in their syllabi.

But for some students, turning to a teacher may seem inconvenient or unnecessary.

You’re rushing to get to the next class, forgot to read chapter three and the class is in an hour and a half, or you haven’t eaten all day.

These are all valid reasons to dismiss the office hours, but if you can make the time, you should.

I didn’t learn that until my senior year, and I’m not saying I regret the fact, but now that I know the benefits, it just seems silly to dismiss a resource right in front of me.

I went home and made the corrections he made and a little of my own. When I turned it in, he read it and said that it was A-work.

But if doing a first draft makes a C+ an A-, some extra time should be the least of our concerns.

And with the availability of the professors, it seems to be fair that they look at us with a brow raised when we ask for five chances for extra credit.

Most of us have opportunities to come in before the test and time to visit the tutoring services to edit the research paper.

Then again, maybe you don’t. Maybe you have a 30-hour-a-week job, loads of homework, are a member of a club, or have a family to take care of.

But once again, the method here is balance. And don’t be ashamed, if you can’t manage it all don’t do it all.

Our professors want us to succeed, they want us to understand the material they’re teaching us, but they also want us to reach out and seek up for more knowledge. Professors can only meet us halfway.

We need to take control of the resources we do have, instead of blaming others for pitfalls we could have otherwise overcome with a little vigor.

One thing I’ve learned from one of my professors here at FIU, it’s that you can’t sit back and let life happen to you.

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Video Games and Violence: Off-Target Answers

ISAAC ORTIZ
Contributing Writer

After the tragedy in Aurora, Colo. and the devastation in Newtown, Conn., millions of Americans looked for answers.

Parents especially wanted to understand and find the answers as to why gun violence is so persistent in this country.

But often people point a finger at the wrong things when they are desperate for answers.

Many people came to the conclusion that violent video games have made teens more aggressive and even desensitized them to the violence.

My question is: Why?

The violence in video games has nothing to do with the violence someone else committed.

I don’t think video games are to blame for the recent shootings. I understand the concept of empathy but to say one man’s doing was caused by a source of entertainment is very bold.

This perceived connection between violence and gaming has actually been disproven by a number of research studies.

The Washington Post studied the 10 largest game markets in the world and reported there was “no [evidence of] statistical correlation between video game consumption and gun-related killings.”

Of the 10 largest game markets, the U.S. has the most gun-related violence. The figures are incredible and lead me to believe that the games aren’t the problem.

There are some other issues going on here, and the solution isn’t taking away little Timmy’s “Call of Duty”.

This is an argument based on a difference of perspective and values.

The video game industry, just like the movie industry is rated. If parents decide to let their children play a gory and violent game that is clearly labeled for adults only, then the parent shouldn’t complain. Instead of saying, “Violence is too much for children...Games are to blame,” parents should learn to protect their own kids.

Every day millions of people look for answers during times of tragedy. People often want the simple answer to their questions.

The truth is the answer is never simple. It’s a combination of various factors: political, cultural, moral, and personal.

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TAKING EXTRA PRECAUTIONS

“I’m mom says she’s not taking any chances”
Media coverage of 2012 shootings ignites debate

Monique Nicoleau, a Westminster Christian High School teacher with a minor in physiology recognizes the power of media towards adults and younger. However, she also emphasizes the existence of other factors that strongly influence a child's behavior, such as genetics, family, and educational environment.

"Media, in general speaking, has a tremendous power. Though parents and school leaders are also responsible for a child's physical and mental health growth," said Nicoleau.

From James Holmes' open fire in Aurora, Colo. on July 20 during a midnight screening of "The Dark Knight Rises," killing 12 people and injuring 60 others, to the catastrophic massive shooting at Newtown, Conn. in Sandy Hook Elementary School where Adam Lanza killed a total of 20 children and six adults, these tragedies captured every newspaper's front page and TV news reporting outlines.

Moreover, the 2012 media coverage of massive shooting tragedies around the country has been a hot topic for debate as well. Some media and experts have constructed a strong critique towards the media, categorizing it as sensationalist and insensitive.

"I am a little different to that of Brooks', they both have the same goal: to create a new generation of humility for today's society and generation. Brooks' course focuses on humility and teaching individuals how to deal with them with ideas of famous thinkers; Armagan hopes to provide the healthy balance of confidence and charity in the world. Armagan's course will be taught in the spring and fall semesters, and possibly even online.

Jim Keys, senior professor in the Department of Finance, believes that saying there is a lack of humility in this generation is a bit generalized, since there are so many accounts and reasons to why today's generation is the way it is.

"As educators, we are told all the time, 'How do we teach students? How do we teach the course format?'", said Keys. "When I first started teaching, the class size was 45 [students]."

Over the years, Keys said his classes have grown to as much as 300 students, creating a lack of personal feedback, as well as lack of involvement. When he began teaching 25 years ago at the University, students answered questions on exams by writing out the answers. Now, he has no choice but to give multiple choice exams due to the increased class size.

"Your feedback [on exams] is either right or wrong," said Keys.

Illustration by Holly McCooch/The Beacon

New generation of self-absorbance calls for humility training

New generation of self-absorbance calls for humility training

HOLLY MCCOACH
Staff Writer

This generation, compared to past generations, has been thought of as being self-absorbed, with a great lack of humility and modesty, according to professionals in the writing field.

Dave Brooks, columnist for The New York Times and Yale University professor, will teach a global studies seminar on modesty and humility at Yale this spring semester.

Leading up to this decision of distributing knowledge to students, Brooks has publicly critiqued the self-absorbed generation of today. This includes a speech at George-town University on the munace of too much pride, as well as a "Modesty Manifesto" at the Aspen Ideas Festival on similar topics.

Brooks' course, titled, "Humility," will discuss works by Martin Luther King, Jr., Moses, Augustine, Homer, and more, as well as the study of character building and leadership.

Brooks is not the only one with the idea that this generation is too into themselves.

Jean Twenge, author of "Generation Me," believes self-absorption is "America itself and believes the causes to be the Internet, easy credit, celebrity culture and media, and changes in parenting and education.

Although the Internet may be a factor, Twenge believes technology has been helpful to society for the most part, but it creates a lack of a personal connection that can benefit most people.

As for social networking, Twenge compares it to food, in that social networking is "junk food," and in-person relationships are "healthy food."

This lack of "healthy food" in today's generation is what Brooks believes leads to the increased amount of loneliness and depression in today's society.

"I actually love the idea of such a course being taught," said Sibel Armagan, professor in the Department of Management and International Business at FIU.

According to Armagan, a healthy balance of self-love and humility in the workplace should be practiced, and as a result, she is teaching a course this semester about it.

Titled, "Happiness at Work," the course will look at how individuals can increase the joy and purpose in their jobs and careers and how they can actually become happier and more fulfilled individuals in their jobs, whether they work for themselves or for someone else.

"I think we need more courses that contribute positively to the lives of individuals as well as the community in general," said Armagan.

Even though Armagan's course is a little different to that of Brooks', they both have the same goal: to create a new generation of humility for today's society and generation.

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Calling all film critics: your chance is here!

With a fine year in film now gone and a new year full of new films approaching, it’s the perfect time for those who love talking about movies to get to work.

Whether you’re new to the world of film criticism or you think of yourself as a regular Pauline Kael, it’s time to sharpen your knives because in comes the season for competition.

No, it’s not the Oscars or the Golden Globes, although everyone surely has their bets placed for those already, but something that allows anyone who loves to talk about movies to participate.

The Miami International Film Festival, now in its thirty-seventh year, has opened up an amazing opportunity for students this year.

In addition to their student filmmaking competition “CinemaSlam,” the festival is introducing the Miami Future Cinema Critics program.

Offering the chance for both video and written word film bloggers, the MFCC will be selecting a group of seven Miami writers to watch a special playlist of films curated by the MIFF programming team.

Of these eight to ten features, the MFCC will decide on a “best film” together and offer one lucky filmmaker the chance to have their feature known as the Miami Future Cinema Critics Best Film of 2013.

Michael Bay might be delivering another trash hit this year, but the MFCC gives anyone from ages 21.5 to 30 a shot at looking into movies outside of everything commercially released in the US.

The age range and the option of either written or video film criticism allows for a wide competition, so be sure to submit your best application.

Even the application process is as simple as can be. It is comprised of a cover letter, resume, proof of past or current undergraduate study and three writing samples of 500 words or three audio/video samples limited to two and a half minutes.

More information on that can be found online at the MIFF website. MiamiFilmFestival.com, under the Miami Future Cinema Critics tab.

So students, call your friends or don’t to lower the competition, but get out there and gather up your application because the deadline is Friday, Jan. 18. With the festival only a few months away, it’s a deadline those interested will be as keen to remember as this film critic.

Me’ generation to face trouble in the workplace, experts say

HUMILITY, PAGE 4

Keys also admits that students were incredibly more focused years ago.

“They kind of had to be [involved],” said Keys. “You had more one-on-one contact with them.”

Although Keys is unsure of what has created our generation into one of self-indulgence, it is differences such as these that could contribute to the overall effect. Keys feels a humility course being taught at Yale is a bit obscure and feels it is something that cannot be taught.

“It’s like trying to teach someone ethics,” said Keys. “It’s like going back to the Golden Rule.”

According to Keys, humility is something that you are raised with, not taught.

Freddy Pires, a freshman finance major, sheds light on his feelings of our generation. “Our generation no longer holds intrinsic value in doing something out of self-determination,” Pires said.

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No language barriers in basketball for Russian transfer

Marita Davydova (left) is averaging 10 points and a team-leading 8.6 rebounds per game in her junior year. "I have a sports family. So everyone knew that I would go to basketball." Davydova said. "We knew she could play here," said Head Coach Richard Pitino. "We knew that she could give us quality time but I don’t know if I could have expected this much." Just 12 games into her FIU career, Davydova plays a huge role on the team. The Moscow native currently ranks second on the team in scoring at 10.3 points per game and leads the team in rebounding at a rate of 8.7 rebounds per game. "I wanted to be a part of the team right away and do my best," Davydova said. Basketball, however, was not her first sport. Her first passion was swimming. She began swimming at 5 years old and loved it. She picked up a couple of more sports before turning to basketball too. As a young child, she started to play tennis and the weather in Russia helped facilitate ice skating for a while.

"When I was 5 years old, I had a schedule," Davydova said. "I would wake up and go to kindergarten, then after that my father would pick me up and I would go to the swimming pool and then I would go play tennis." Finally, when she was 10 years old Davydova picked up a basketball, an inevitable considering her family had so much history with the sport. Both her father and brother are referees for the International Basketball Federation and her father called an Olympic finals game. Her mother played for the Russian National team as well. "I have a sports family. So everyone knew that I would go to basketball. Davydova said. It is common for European basketball players to aspire to play basketball in America, but this wasn’t necessarily Davydova’s approach. She never thought about playing in the U.S. because she enjoyed playing at home so much. That changed one day when a former FIU player, Olesja Melnikova, wrote to Davydova and expressed how much she enjoyed FIU. Melnikova talked about how great the coaches were and that the team was good. This was enough to gain some interest from Davydova, who looked into this transition. Once she decided on the move, though, her fears came back. "I was afraid about studying. How could I study in a foreign language?" Davydova said. Once Davydova arrived at FIU, she was quickly overwhelmed with all the help she received with her studies. She had a tutor for every course and the transition to studying in a foreign place became easier.

Looking back at it now, Davydova smiles because her fear of a language barrier has vanished. "I like [Miami] very much, but at the time I was afraid and my parents were afraid," she said. "My mom would say, ‘How are you going to go to another country with a foreign language nobody will understand? What will you do?’" Davydova has quickly become part of the women’s basketball family. She gets her fair share of good times. "I always tell these guys that worrying about the next game. Certainly we want to do much better than be at .500, that’s not a goal of ours to be at .500," Pitino said. Pitino has no problems winning at home, as they are currently 4-2 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena. Pitino is aware of this success, and hopes to continue to build on it.

"I think this place is a special place," Pitino said. "I think the sky’s the limit with this place, our kids love going to school here. They love being in South Florida so there’s no reason why we can’t continue to build."
**Saban restless in a way rest of us are not**

“Some of the most stubborn have made that connection themselves now, mentioning Saban in the same sentence with Bryant, and adding the “D-word” (dynasty) at the end that was once reserved for Bryant.”

Saban’s counterpart, Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly, said his colleague’s success made quibbling over descriptions irrelevant.

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**Nissen: “I see her becoming a tremendous power for us…”**

As far as continuing her dream of playing professional basketball, she has a couple of experienced basketball minds that see that potential in her.

“I think she can go to the next level for sure,” Russo said. “She has good hands. She is physical. She has good size and has a nice touch on the ball. Those are all things you can’t teach.”

“She is going to be an awesome player,” said associate head coach and member of the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame Inge Nissen. “I see her becoming a tremendous power for us before she is done here.”

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**Ribi, among others, breaks multiple records**

“The win was Saban’s fourth national championship, which left him tied with Notre Dame’s Frank Leach for second on The Crimson Tide’s ‘all-time list, and behind only Paul “Bear” Bryant, the most famed of his predecessors at Alabama.”

“Saban rarely comes off as a man who speaks from the heart. More often, he sounds like someone cobbled together bits and pieces called from a shelf’s worth of books on motivational speaking, which Saban happens to have turned into a lucrative sideline. Maybe that’s what made the story he told about his father seem so touching. This time, the lesson was that the father-son dynamic ignites a spark of ambition that will never, ever go out. And if there were any contest, the lesson was on the mark.”

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**DAVYDOVA, PAGE 6**

“Davydova is always happy because she has the potential of playing out her dream here in the states.”

“Her nickname is ‘Smiles A Lot,’” Russo said. “There are moments where you usually see stress in people’s face and you look at her and she just smiles.”

Maybe Davydova is always happy because she has the potential of playing out her dream here in the states. As far as continuing her dream of playing professional basketball, she has a couple of experienced basketball minds that see that potential in her.

“I think she can go to the next level for sure,” Russo said. “She has good hands. She is physical. She has good size and has a nice touch on the ball. Those are all things you can’t teach.”

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**ASCOCIATED PRESS**

**JIM LITKE

AP Sports Columnist**

At some point, this much success should have brought joy, or at the very least, a deep sense of satisfaction. It’s only made Nick Saban more in relentless than the last.

If nothing else, it will be interesting to see him try to top this year.”

The win was Saban’s fourth national championship, which left him tied with Notre Dame’s Frank Leach for second on The Crimson Tide’s ‘all-time list, and behind only Paul “Bear” Bryant, the most famed of his predecessors at Alabama.

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**PANTHER OF THE WEEK**

**Tyrell Murphy dominated with 48 points, 25 boards, 6 blocks and a .541 FG percent in his last two games**

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**SPORTS**

*The Beacon – Friday, January 11, 2013*
Briton gets 33 months for weapons-to-Iran plot

JUAN CARLOS LLORCA

A federal judge sentenced a British businessman to nearly three years in prison Wednesday for trying to buy surface-to-air missile parts from undercover U.S. agents to resell to Iran.

Christopher Tappin, 66, pleaded guilty in November to aiding and abetting to export defense materials in a deal that opened the door for him to serve part of his sentence in Britain near his ailing wife. U.S. District Judge David Briones in El Paso said Wednesday that he would recommend that the U.S. Department of Justice approve any request by Tappin to be transferred to the United Kingdom.

Tappin read a brief statement during the sentencing hearing in which he apologized for the crime.

“I regret my actions and the impact they had on my family,” he said. “I am looking forward to putting this incident behind me and returning to my previous unblemished life and my wife.”

As part of the plea deal, prosecutors agreed not to oppose any request by Tappin to serve part of his 33-month sentence in Britain. Along with approval from the Department of Justice, Tappin also needs approval from the British government to serve time in one of its prisons.

In 2006, Tappin associate Robert Gibson contacted a company set up by undercover U.S. agents to buy batteries for surface-to-air missiles. U.S. authorities alleged Tappin provided undercover agents with false documents to deceive authorities and circumvent the requirement for the batteries to be licensed by the U.S. government before being exported.

“We hope this sends a message to people that are selling defense materials that we monitor sales and shipments, and that we are watching,” federal prosecutor Greg McDonald said Wednesday.

The judge dismissed charges of conspiracy to conduct illegal financial transactions. Tappin must also pay an $11,357 fine, the amount he would have profited from the sale.

Tappin must report to prison by March 8. His lawyers asked that he be allowed to report to a Pennsylvania prison, something the judge said he did not oppose. Tappin will likely spend six to nine months in the United States before being sent back to Britain, Tappin’s attorney, Dan Cogdell, said. There, he will serve no more than half of the remaining sentence, Cogdell said.

“I look forward to returning home to be near my friends and family, and especially my sick wife,” Tappin said afterward.

Tappin fought extradition to the United States for two years until being denied a petition to take the case to Britain’s Supreme Court. His extradition touched a nerve in Britain among those who believe extraditions of British citizens are unfairly weighted against British citizens.

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A FEAST FIT FOR PANTHERS

On Jan. 9th, Campus Life at Biscayne Bay Campus hosted a free brunch in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms for students and faculty. From fruits and eggs to pastelitos and sandwiches of all types, the line wrapped around the outside hall to the stairs. Not only was there a complimentary meal, but University President Mark S. Rosenberg was there to greet each and every person in line before they received their brunch.

**OSCAR BALDIZON**
Contributing Writer

It may be winter but the FIU women’s swimming team is heating up at the right time.

After a winter break filled with a training trip to the Keys, three meets against top tier competition, and countless yards swam, the team is on track to meet and exceed the expectations they put on themselves at the beginning of this season.

The mission from the get go this year was to go out and win FIU’s first Sun Belt Conference championship in swimming and diving.

The winter break started off with the team’s most important meet of the first semester, the Mizzi Invitte.

The team enjoyed a weekend where it broke five FIU swimming records and had 42 finishes on the Panther all-time top-ten list. Marina Ribi broke her 200 fly record for the second time this season and Sonia Perez broke her 400 IM record by blowing everyone else in the pool away with a seven second win margin over second place.

“Overall, for a mid season event, I feel this is exactly what we needed to accomplish to stay right on track for that Conference Championship we’re aiming for,” Head Coach Randy Horner said.

The Panthers continued their winter success at the Nova South-eastern Invitational in Fort Lauderdale. Fla. Perez broke her third record of the season with a first place finish in the 1000 Freestyle.

She beat everyone by more than six seconds, but that wasn’t even the most amazing part of the performance.

The team had practiced for two hours earlier that morning, lifted weights, and then traveled to the meet before Perez broke the record.

**The Beacon – 8**

The Panthers will host Central Connecticut today at home. The meet will start at 6 p.m. at the BBC Aquatic Center.