Cuba eliminates restrictions on traveling laws

STEPHAN USECHE
Asst. News Director

The Cuban government implemented a new travel law and with it, the benefit of Cuban residents to travel to other countries. According to the Miami Herald, long lines formed in Havana, Cuba on Monday, Jan. 14 outside of travel agencies and migration offices.

The new law allows Cubans to leave the country with a passport and a national identity card. This eliminates the requirement of obtaining an exit visa, also known as a “carta blanca,” or “white card,” which is the authorization for leaving Cuba.

“The law makes it easy to travel abroad as long as they can get a visa from those countries, but that’s going to be the main issue,” said Jorge Duany, director of the Cuban Research Institute. “Only 15 countries in the world actually don’t require visas for Cubans, but most of those countries aren’t the ones that Cubans want to go to visit or migrate to.”

Duany realizes the benefits that this law brings to the Cuban community: “It is a step in the right direction of making it easier for Cubans to travel back and forth,” said Duany. “It eliminates a number of requirements like [an] exit visa, which was a very expensive and a very complicated procedure.”

The 15 countries that allow entry to Cubans without a visa are Hungary, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia, Barbados, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Granada, San Cristobal and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Moldavia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

“So, the U.S., Spain, Venezuela, Mexico, those countries which would be the target of migrants do require visas,” said Duany. “In that sense, the law won’t increase migrants or Cubans traveling, but it will increase the pressure on those countries to regulate the number of visas that allow Cubans to travel to those countries.”

Along with the new traveling law, the Cuban government also changed the migration law, which according to Duany, will now allow Cubans to retain rights and privileges in Cuba as long as they don’t leave for more than 24 months. It also allows those who have left Cuba to come back for 90 days. Information technology software major Lexy Fovo has family in Cuba.

HOPE FOR HAITI

HOPE FOR HAITI

IRELAND G. GARLAND
Contributing Writer

The Haitian Student Organization, External Relations and the Graham Center hosted the third annual ceremony to commemorate the victims of the earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010.

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Gender neutral toys becoming more prominent

NYESHA C. GARLAND
Contributing Writer

Everyone has had a favorite childhood toy, growing up. A product that, when you were younger, you couldn’t fathom living without.

Although we didn’t think much about toys in the past, products and catalogs are now under scrutiny because of gender bias. Protests against overly girly Easy Bake Ovens, ponies, and playtime cleaning sets are now forcing companies, such as Hasbro, to change its marketing.

Thirteen year-old McKenna Pope outspokenly challenged the company to make an Easy-Bake Oven that her brother could play with. And, as a result, Hasbro complied.

“It’s black and blue and silver,” she said, according to the Daily Beast. “It kind of looks like an appliance you would legitimately have in your kitchen.”

“That contrasts with the existing oven, in swirly shades of purple, which looks like it belongs only inside the maximum-security segregation unit known as Girls’ Toys.”

Protests against gender specific toys have also forced one of Sweden’s largest toy chains, Top Toy, to present girls playing with Nerf Guns, and boys playing with dolls, according to the Daily Mail.

Although the idea seems progressive, separating the bold line between girls and boys toys can be exhausting and meticulous. As Professor Maria Elena Villar of Advertising says, “we [still] have a long way to go.”

Stores across the globe already, expertly divide parts of stores in order to lead children towards their “appropriate” side; with girly aisles decorated in pinks and jewels and boy aisles, blue actions figures which yell out “Poo! Boom! Smash!” when you walk by.

Katie Goldman, mother and author of Bullied: What Every Parent, Teacher and Kid Needs to Know About Ending the Cycle of Fear, explains that another reason stores segregate toys is to promote sales. A mother with one son and one daughter can easily buy two different soccer balls- one pink and one blue. Ultimately, the kids don’t have logs, and now in cases of bullying, many of them are looking for immediate solutions.

Laura Dinehart, early childhood education professor and

I bought numerous Lego sets this Christmas- and not the “Friends Collection” that Lego released to market specifically to girls.

Barbara Weitz
Professor English

I bought numerous Lego sets this Christmas- and not the “Friends Collection” that Lego released to market specifically to girls.

She encourages her girls to play with all toys, and believes that it’s our responsibility, as role models, to promote the same behavior.

“I bought numerous Lego sets this Christmas- and not the “Friends Collection” that Lego released to market specifically to girls,” Dinehart said.

Professor Villar relates, agreeing that we need to start evolving a world that doesn’t separate boys and girls: a world of freedom of expression.

She says discouraging girls from playing with toys, such as Star Wars, could push away the appeal of science, math, engineering, and space careers for women. To her, it goes beyond colors.

With gender neutral toy marketing in place, companies aim to blur the line between feminine and masculine, right and wrong, boy and girl, and instead advertise toys for everyone to love.

“I bought numerous Lego sets this Christmas- and not the “Friends Collection” that Lego released to market specifically to girls. “
Reiterating a threat he first issued in the summer of 2011, President Barack Obama on Monday warned that if Congress fails to raise the federal debt ceiling, the United States might not be able to pay its bills and could default on obligations like Social Security and veterans' benefits.

In a letter to Obama on Friday, Senate Democratic leaders urged him to consider taking any “lawful steps” to prevent such a default. But he would not break its promises and trigger a global economic crisis — without congressional approval, if necessary.

He has rejected recommendations that it invoke a provision in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution that states “the validity of the public debt of the United States shall not be questioned.”

It could force the Treasury to contemplate selling government assets, a step considered but rejected in 2011. In such a debt crisis, the president would have to decide what laws he wants to break. Does he breach the borrowing limit without a congressional OK? Does he ignore spending commitments required by law?

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Preparation matters in school safety

DIANA ANAYA
Contributing Writer

From Virginia Tech to Sandy Hook, to the more recent shooting at Taft Union High School in California late last week, it’s hard to feel safe at school anymore. School shootings have turned into a trend that shows little signs of stopping, spurred along by the excessive amount of media coverage on these tragic events.

So how do we prepare for the worst at FIU in order to decrease the chances of a shooting?

The short answer is, we can’t. Unless we upgraded to airport-like security, which would be nearly impossible for too many reasons to explain. But our campus security is as good as it can get, which is pretty good.

The University Police Department page has detailed information on the various types of emergencies that could occur, including active shooter incidents.

Information, such as “what is an active shooter” and “how to respond when an active shooter is in your vicinity,” is presented with minute instructions.

Other emergencies, such as fire, bomb threats, and missing persons are all covered as well, and many of the services they offer are free of charge to students and faculty.

As students, we need to know this information in case any of these emergencies were to occur.

Being knowledgeable on what should be done in these circumstances is the least we can do, and the most important thing, especially if you live on campus.

But beyond being educated, we need to be brave. Not brave in the sense of risking your life for others, an admirable act; that’s something that cannot be asked of everyone.

We need to have the courage to tell someone when we see something or someone suspicious.

It may be wrong, and hopefully it is, but it’s being aware of your surroundings and making your concern known to people like the University police that can save lives.

The other solution is to be politically active. Whatever you believe will change the current state of security, both in our school as well as in our state or country.

Make your opinion known. Write letters to congressmen, talk to the University police about campus security, or just get informed on how to better prepare yourself.

Because the truth of the matter is that being a student, as it’s been made painfully clear, does not mean you’re safe.

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Enriching entertainment: the good in gaming

NERLYN GALAN
Contributing Writer

Video games have been popular since the 1970s, and by the 1990s they could be seen almost every home in the United States. So while spending almost half of my winter break playing my brand new Assassin’s Creed 3 game I began to wonder: are video games good for us?

In my opinion: Yes.

But I wanted to see how others felt about it. So I went to the halls of our beloved GC and asked around at our local GameStop to get more information.

I learned that there are hundreds of different types of games with the four most popular being first person shooters (FPS), action role-playing games (RPG), sports, and finally strategy.

Almost every video game now has multiplayer options connecting you over the Internet with people playing the same game.

The most sold games at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus are first person shooters and sports games, mainly for the XBox 360 and PS3 consoles.

Through interviewing patrons and employees about their favorite types of games and the average amount of time they spent playing them, I found that the majority of the students in the store were mostly FPS and/or RPG gamers.

RPG games have been around since before computers had graphic images and were composed mostly of text, while first-person shooters were first invented by the military as a training tool for soldiers and eventually found their way into the hands of the public.

It has become a trend in the media and the general public to credit these games as being a source of real life experiences and even causing the consumers to become violent.

According to my survey, the average RPG and FPS gamer spends 2 to 5 hours on average each day playing, which is about equal to the 3.8 hours that users spend on social media, according to marketingcharts.com.

Video games, while in some instances consuming much of a person’s time, at least causes the gamer to critically think, requiring them to use strategy and skill to solve complex situations.

Multi-player options enable you to play with others, creating a sense of community for the players, in a way being a more interactive active medium than all the so-called “social media” havens for anyone who plays.

These games are a safe haven for anyone who plays them allowing an easy and harmless escape from reality.

The general public argues that it’s a violent and inappropriate escape causing our youth to have more violent tendencies and outbreaks.

However, many gamers didn’t agree with this statement saying that in reality they would not do the actions they do in the games, but simply enjoyed playing the game.

This led me to believe that maybe this is what the media and general public were trying to get at: The parents lacked the understanding of which age group the games were appropriate for and didn’t regulate the amount of time their children spent playing. But instead the video games got the bad reputation, when in reality they offer a lot of great advantages; when consumed in moderation and properly, they can actually be healthy.

Regardless of what the media publishes I know we will keep doing what gamers do best: Keep Calm and Game On.

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Opinion

Firing coaches doesn’t make financial sense

As students we need to see a different type of management from the Athletics.

In 2012, Isaiah Thomas and Mario Cristobal were fired after serving three and six years as head coach of the men’s basketball team and football team, respectively.

It’s arguable that three years is not enough time for Thomas to bring success to the basketball team on the court, a task he failed to accomplish after finishing with a 26-65 record over his three years. What isn’t arguable is that Thomas did bring success to the team off the court.

The team’s Academic Progress Rate for Thomas’ final year as coach was 910, low compared to a national average of 944.88, but the first time the men’s basketball program finished with a score above 900. Also, before Thomas was hired the University was under academic probation. Thomas had a yearly base salary of $220,000, but he chose not accept his first year’s salary.

In Cristobal’s first two years, the football team finished a year two of a five-year contract with a yearly base salary of $450,000 – the team finished with a 3-9 record. That record is horrible.

What isn’t horrible is the two years immediately preceding 2012 where the team finished 6-6 and 8-4 and was invited to back-to-back bowl games.

In the same year the coaches were fired, the athletics fee increased by 5 cents, the first time in six years the fee was increased.

We aren’t using the coaches’ record to argue that they should not have been fired, but that more financial responsibility should be applied going forward.

A USA Today breakdown of college athletics’ finances shows in 2011 total revenue of the University athletics department was $23.8 million with $16.9 million coming from student fees. This leaves a difference of $6.9 million generated from other avenues – ticket sales and advertising on athletic venues.

As students are the main contributors of the athletic department at the University, we need to see more of a willingness on Athletics’ part to be financially responsible with the money it obtains.

Both Thomas and Cristobal, although fired and not working for the University, are still under contract and could still be able to receive their paychecks from the University.

Now a question may arise, “Do you want to play someone else and do a bad job?”, the answer would be, “No, of course not.” But we’d rather pay coaches to do a job at FIU instead of paying them even after they’re fired.

We would rather have seen Cristobal stay and finish the final three years of his contract. That way he would be here working on recovering from a 39-9 record instead of bringing on and paying a new coach while Cristobal is still under contract and, hypothetically, on a beach in Hawaii paid for with student money.
Architect Rick Joy to lecture at University

KEILA DIAZ
Contributing Writer

Architect Rick Joy will visit FIU next week to discuss his 22-year architecture career in a lecture titled, “Taking the Time.”

Joy is well-known for his work in the desert of Arizona, as well as other international projects. His designs often employ environmentally sustainable materials, attention to space and low impact to the surrounding areas.

According to his nomination for Alumnus of the Year Award 2012 from the University of Arizona, Joy was a founding member of the Environmental Design Council of Tucson. He has received several awards for his works. In 2004 the Smithsonian Institution-Cooper Hewitt Museum awarded him the National Design Award, and in 2008 he won the American Architecture Award.

Some of Joy’s most popular works include the Woodstock Farm in Vermont, the Desert Nomad House in Arizona and the Amagiri Resort in Utah. Today, Joy is the head of his own architecture firm, Rick Joy Architects in Tucson, Ariz., which he established in 1993 after graduating from the University of Arizona.

In 2002, Joy published the visually stirring “Desert Works,” which is a compilation of detailed photographs of nine of his projects in the Sonoran Desert, description of the building process and other narratives. The book has received good reviews from architecture magazines, including Architectural Record.

Joy and his firm have also worked internationally. In 2011 he was chosen as one of the architects for the development of the Pan American Villa in Guadalajara, Mexico as part of the Pan American Games. Harvard, Yale and M.I.T are among the various institutions that have hosted Joy as a guest professor.

During the lecture, Joy will discuss with students his firm’s major projects and how they represent core values that he developed as an architect over the years. One such project is the Princeton University Project. According to Town Topics, Princeton’s weekly newspaper, the project involved the design of a new train station that is being relocated from a different part of the university’s campus.

Joy’s purpose is that students walk away from the lecture knowing that being a good architect requires a personal development of a strong set of core values and that to do good work requires a lot of hard work and care. After the lecture, students will be able to ask Joy questions as part of a question-and-answer session.

One of the most interesting architects of the time, according to New Voices in Architecture, Joy’s inspiration for design is drawn from natural phenomena, and this is perhaps why he has chosen the desert as the background for his major projects.

His buildings feature large, open, naturally lit spaces. His designs are simple, yet luxurious and they blend into the landscape as if they had been there all along. The distinctiveness of Joy’s designs and their environmental appeal are becoming more important as alternative living spaces become more popular.

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Smartphones, both benefit and distract students

ASHLEY OROZCO
Columnist

It’s 8:58 a.m. Somewhere outside of GL 100 sits a lonely freshman, waiting for his 9 a.m. class to begin. Apparently, his classmates have all fallen ill because those who are usually there before he is are nowhere to be seen.

Any other student would whip out their smartphone to check if the professor has sent an email about class being cancelled. Unfortunately, this particular student does not own a smartphone and instead waits for about 15 minutes before deciding class is most likely not meeting today.

According to Onbile’s mobile market research, out of the 5 billion mobile phones in the world, 1.08 billion are smartphones. Nowadays, smartphone owners range from middle schoolers to businessmen and everyone in between. They have become increasingly popular in the recent years, especially among college students. The Blackberry was the way to go for a while. Then came the Androids and iPhones, which dominate today’s market at 75 and 14.9 percent, respectively, since November 2012, according to The Washington Post. The remaining 10.1 percent is broken into Blackberry, Windows, Symbian and Linux phones. Neither one can be deemed “superior” to the other as it is all a matter of preference, which changes from individual to individual.

However, some points students and other consumers may consider when choosing a smartphone can include battery life-most Androids, like the Galaxy SIII, have an average battery life of 350 minutes, while the iPhone 5 has an average battery of 200 minutes. Androids also have removable batteries. For memory-the iPhone can hold 16 GB, 32GB or 64 GB, while most Androids have MicroSD slots for removable memory; for applications-while the Android has several app stores, some apps are made exclusively for the Apple app store. Instagram, for example, did not come out on the Android market until almost three years after it had been released for Apple.

With all the capabilities that smartphones possess, students are using their phones for more than just for social networks now. “I discovered this app, ‘Evernote,' which allows me to write notes from my laptop. After that, it is able to sync to my phone and Nook almost instantaneously,” said freshman Kaitlynn Gutierrez.

The University has also made its own app with a multitude of features that would help even the most spirited student. Applications such as Blackboard, Dropbox, Google Drive and Catch Notes are among the few that really benefit students. Blackboard acts as a mobile Blackboard site while Google Drive and Dropbox act as mobile hard drives that can transfer files from your computer to other devices and vice versa. Even email capabilities can allow a professor to quickly get in contact with his or her students if, say, an emergency arises and they must cancel their 9 a.m. class.

However, as great as having a smartphone might seem, it can cause as much harm as it does good. “There is plenty of time to link in, break up, trade stocks or shop after class,” says Dileep Rao, professor of entrepreneurship. “Since [students] are paying for their education, they may want to pay attention to class. Employers will appreciate [those] good habits.”

The distractions don’t stop in the classroom. “Last semester, I found myself checking Facebook and Instagram and wasting 20 minutes when all I meant to do was check what chapters were going to be on my next exam so I could study,” said senior Janet Janero.

It helps to be technologically savvy, and smartphones can put you at an edge; however, being savvy also means knowing which situations are appropriate for using your smartphone. Potential employers may want a quick response from an email they sent, but that doesn’t mean you should reply while your professor is giving a review for a final.

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FRESH PICNIC

Housing freshmen students decide to have a picnic simply because the weather was delightful, and were encouraging students to join in on the fun.

FISTFUL OF TECH

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Fishing club a catch for students across FIU

JOSEPH M. RAMIREZ
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The motif behind FIU’s Fishing Club comes from a verse in Zac Brown Band’s “Knee Deep”: “Knee deep in the water somewhere, got the blue sky breeze and it don’t seem fair, only worry in the world ‘Is the tide gonna reach my chair?’”

What started out as a few fraternity men casually fishing while paying homage to this catchy motto instantly caught the eye of Johnny Davalos’ decision to found the Fishing Club.

“Fishing is such an important part of my life and all the times I have gone on fishing trips it has brought me nothing but great satisfaction. Not only do I enjoy fishing, but it is an excellent way to just block all of the stresses in life and what it comes down to is just you and the water,” Davalos said.

A member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, Davalos noticed the high amount of interest in fishing among his fraternity brothers. But while his brothers were avid fishermen, Davalos was discouraged by the serious lack of interest in such a relaxing sport such as fishing within the overall FIU student body.

“Outside of Pike, I really was shocked when how many people did not care too much for fishing being that it is such a gratifying sport,” Davalos said. “Since fishing is so important to me, I felt I needed to share the joy I get from fishing with the rest of the FIU community.”

The club member Camilo Anias with the biggest catch in club history, a 40-pound Cobia off Cape Canaveral in early October.

Panthers display split personality on road trip

KEVIN CASTANEDA
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No secret that the FIU men’s basketball team left on their two-game road trip last week with their heads held high.

The squad won three straight home games for the first time in a decade and reached the 500 mark on their record. They took this confidence with them on the road to Arkansas. “Knee deep to the 10-7 Red Wolves, a team they beat 80-61 on Jan. 10.

After conveying the idea of being out on the water, away from all of life’s stresses, he attracted a bundle of students interested in the Fishing Club and 20 people signed up as the club’s co-founders.

Davalos was then able to draw enough interest for FIU to grant the necessary recognition and future funding to start the Fishing Club.

Currently, the club has about 35 members and does not have any form of set rules, solely a pay-as-you-go policy which may include purchasing one’s bait, fishing trip fees and other accessories.

The importance of the Panthers field-goal defense could not be more overstated considering they lost the turnover margin by three, were out rebounded by 11 and committed 22 fouls.

For the second time against the Red Wolves, the Panthers shot above 50 percent from the field and for the first time this season, the Panthers were above 50”, with an 8-7 record.

Head Coach Richard Pitino has always remarked about guard Deric Hill being his game changer.

Pitino reinserted Hill into the starting line-up against the Red Wolves, something Pitino hadn’t done since Nov. 24 against Coastal Carolina.

Coming off the bench for the majority of the season, Hill managed to still be ranked third in the SBC in steals, with nearly two a game. Hill has even averaged about three assists per game, which is better than Gaby Belardo’s two per contest. Belardo had passed Hill early in the season as the starting point guard, but Hill’s stats have been more impressive.

The 5-foot-9 sophomore played a huge role in the Arkansas State game. His six rebounds from the guard position helped the team lessen their inefficiency on the boards.

The Panthers shot 60 percent from the field and 67 percent from the free-throw line, scoring 11 points. Even with his offensive success, Hill made sure to dish the ball out, registering three assists.

Hill’s 11-point performance at Arkansas State was a new cog in the machine of victory for FIU and a another vital piece they took to the Arkansas-Little Rock Trojans on Jan. 12.

Only a semester old, the Fishing Club has only gone on a couple fishing voyages, specifically to small islands off the shore of North Miami and Hallandale Beach. According to Ramirez, in the near future the club will venture out on fishing expeditions to the Florida Keys, the Gulf of Mexico and various parts of the Caribbean Sea as well as hosting host to fishing tournaments that will feature grand prizes.

For the avid fisherman, a fishing tournament would be the reasonable place to showcase your skills; however, FIU’s Fishing Club is not only for expert fishermen. Unlike Davalos and Ramirez, winners of multiple local fishing tournaments, members like Jason Jean-Louis never picked up a fishing rod in his life prior to joining the Fishing Club.

“The closest thing I have done to fishing is feeding my pet gold fish,” Jean-Louis said. “When Johnny approached me about the Fishing Club, I was kind of hesitant on joining since I knew I would be clueless. But after hearing him out and coming out for the first island trip, I had a great time and realized how awesome the feeling was when you finally catch a fish.”

As chairmain, Davalos is a true believer that with bigger goals comes bigger responsibility. He is sincere when it comes to water and boat safety as he deems this the most vital and intricate part of maintaining the Fishing Club.

“It’s all fun and games until someone gets hurt,” Davalos said. “It may be a challenge to make sure 30 other fishermen are all on the same page when it comes to safety, but that’s something you just as important as catching fish and having a great time out on the water.

As spring approaches and the club expands, Davalos is highly optimistic that future members will obtain the same satisfaction that Davalos and the rest of the members receive when they’re “knee deep in the water somewhere…”

The Fishing Club begins its newest voyage on Jan. 18 at Lake Okeechobee for their winter fishing expedition. For more information on the Fishing Club contact Davalos and Ramirez, winners of the Fishing Club.

Fishing is such an important part of my life and all the times I have gone on fishing trips it has brought me nothing but great satisfaction. Not only do I enjoy fishing, but it is an excellent way to just block all of the stresses in life and what it comes down to is just you and the water,” Davalos said. “Since fishing is so important to me, I felt I needed to share the joy I get from fishing with the rest of the FIU community.”

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SPORTS
SOFTBALL

BRYAN PALACIO
Contributing Writer

The life of a student-athlete is difficult during the season, but the offseason can be just as trying, especially during the holidays.

“Spots are won in the fall and lost in the spring,” said second-year softball Head Coach Jake Schumann.

While college students get to go home and indulge in as much food, sleep, and alcohol as their bodies can take in, Schumann and the softball team are constantly making sure they’re ready for the upcoming season. They work hard to stay in shape and keep their bodies ready for when their 20-hour work weeks start in spring.

“We meet with them before so they can go home and work on fundamentals,” Schumann said. “Strength and conditioning coach Corey Houston and I give them a work outs for them to focus on. We also tell them to play catch and hit at least three times a week.”

The Panthers are coming off a 28-27 record which was sixth best overall in the Sun-Belt Conference. They were 15-9 in conference play which was third best and a school record in conference wins. They look to improve their record as well as their play, something coach Schumann has a knack of doing.

“We're just working out butts off every day,” senior Brie Rojas said. “I've seen improvement with everybody, strength wise, our conditioning, really all of it. Everyone’s been working really hard, taking extra swings, taking extra ground balls, just getting prepared.”

Since becoming a head coach, Schumann has been able to improve his team’s wins each year. He targets specific goals that he intends to meet, while acknowledging it is not the easiest when you inherit a team. Ten of the 12 seasons he’s been a head coach, he has been able to achieve a team batting average of over .300, from which the two other times were his first years with the programs.

Apart from batting average, the team plans on also focusing in all other areas, for example pitchers are expected to try and lower their ERA by one point. The goal of the squad is to win the conference, not just simply play well in it.

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Your goal is always to win the regular season,” said coach Schumann. “[You want to] Try to place first in the conference, not just simply play well in it.

The team also has its fair share of storylines to keep an eye on. The squad lost their best hitter and most dynamic player in Ashley McClain, a top 25 finalist for best player in college softball, who graduated last year. Schumann stresses that even while there may not be a superstar going into the year, as long as he’s at FIU, it will always be a great team overall.

“It might not be one big stick, but because we all work together so well and we click, I know if I can’t get it done, whoever comes up behind me will. It’s tough not having her but in the lineup but I’m confident that we’ll get the job done,” Rojas said.

Senior players Rojas, Jessy Alfons, Alex Casals, and Kayla Burtie are all returning back to the squad to provide leadership to a team welcoming 12 new players.

Some of the new players include two-time champion from Arizona State Bri Kaye, All-American transfer Amber Curry, first team All-American in Junior-College Krystal Garcia, and highly-touted freshman Corrine Jenkins and Aleyna Lopez. Add in junior pitcher Mary Dawson, who led the league in strikeouts, and the team has a solid foundation with which to build upon.

“I’ve never been this excited about anything,” Rojas said. “I feel really good going into this year and I think everybody agrees. We’re a completely different team, we’re going to do a lot of great things this year that many people aren’t going to expect.”

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NEW YEAR SMACKDOWN

In its first dual meet of the season, the FIU swimming and diving team dominated Central Connecticut State University with a 198-100 victory on Jan. 11.

As offseason nears end, softball coach sets his goals
Dishes like bourbon grilled tilapia with brown rice and steamed broccoli or chicken maksi with white rice and steamed green beans are not dishes necessarily expected on a college campus. Colleges across the nation provide students with several food options, many of which are fast food on the go options; however, many colleges are innovating with healthier, home meal options. At the Biscayne Bay Campus, Grille Works is following that trend with daily home meal options like bourbon tilapia, chicken maksi, and meatloaf.

Executive Chef, Denex Attelus has worked with his front line cook, Robyn and executive cook, and usually one or two cashiers daily. Sonny has been working here for the last 3 years. When approaching Grille Works to place an order, the first thing students encounter is a large life size calendar listing each home meal available for the month with a different meal for every day. “I rarely eat out on campus but when I do, I like the food at Grille Works, especially the home meal options because it’s not fried or processed, it shows that someone put time to prepare it,” said Teddy Rood, hospitality management major.

Most of the time Attelus works in the back of the café, operating his own catering business outside of the campus as a personal hobby. “I do not have a name for my catering company but my friends and associates approach me all the time to cook for them or their event and that’s how I generate my business,” he said. Attelus comes up with the home meal options each month. Some options show his heritage, such as the option of Jan. 15, Griot, which is fried cubed pork and a well known Haitian dish. “I am from Haiti so I speak Creole and like when they see a Haitian dish option, they feel more at home,” said Attelus.

Affordability plays a large role with the hot meal options. They are only $5, but to add a drink and dinner roll it’s just $6.29. “It’s great to have the home meal options available on campus, it gives students an option of a real food which is really nice to have anytime you’re away from home since so many other options on campus are unhealthy,” said Ashley Navarro, junior business major.

Prior to working at Grille Works, Attelus worked at numerous other restaurants, such as PF Changs, Olive Garden, and the Golden Diner and more. “I love cooking it has always been my passion; I remember when cooking is to make something new. The most important thing to remember when cooking is to make sure your food is full of flavor, because students like every option. If your food has good flavor, that’s what makes people buy it,” said Attelus.

Elizabeth Anderson
Research Associate
Department of Earth and Environment

GLOWS works on the ground to implement water supply, sanitation and hygiene services and water management, working closely with local communities to increase social, economic and environmental benefits to people in the developing world. “Water management will increase awareness as well as reduce pressure on freshwater ecosystems,” Anderson said. “And providing water resources for humans will also reduce these pressures.”

Current projects include a water sanitation and hygiene program in West Africa, an integrated natural resource management in watersheds of Georgia, an integrated water sanitation and hygiene program in Tanzania, an integrated water security program in Rwanda, water for biodiversity and human health in Kenya and capacity building of local and national non-governmental organizations and community based organizations in Africa.

“GLOWS is an extension of FIU that is truly ‘Worlds Ahead,’” GLOWS program administrator and environmental studies graduate student Anna Lemos said. Anderson said the program is currently working to extend the project to Colombia. GLOWS is led by the University and financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The consortium includes CARE, WaterAid America, Winrock International, World Vision and the World Wildlife Fund.

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MADISON FANTOZZI
Asst. News Director

Fresh water is a critical resource for the well-being of humans, but also for the plants and animals of the freshwater ecosystem itself. Research associate of the Department of Earth and Environment, Elizabeth Anderson, will discuss the Global Lakes and Watersheds for Sustainability (GLOWS) program and its work to satisfy the water needs of humans without compromising the integrity of ecosystems in her lecture, "Balancing freshwater needs of humans and ecosystems."

“We need to consider ecosystems’ needs for water,” Anderson said. GLOWS and the School of Environment, Arts and Society seek to address the economic and health issues produced by environmental challenges through research of ecosystems and communication with international governments and individuals.

The GLOWS program and its work and initiatives will be discussed in Anderson’s lecture on Wed., Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. at the Deering Estate at Cutler in the Visitor Center Auditorium. According to Anderson, over 1 billion people do not have access to clean water and over 2 billion people do not have access to proper sanitation.

The mission of the GLOWS program is to promote both the management of water resources and aquatic ecosystems. Activities simultaneously promote economic and social benefits from water resources, while sustaining these ecosystems. “It is about designation and allocation,” Anderson said. “For example, determining ‘x’ amount of water a house needs a day and considering ‘y’ needs of animals’ needs for water such as for movement and migration.”

As executive officer of the GLOWS program, Anderson has worked in diverse environments in South America, East Africa and India. The program, which began in 2005, currently spans three continents: Africa, Eurasia and South America.

Different daily dishes provide home flavors

SKYLAR SIEGEL
Contributing Writer

Different daily dishes provide home flavors. With 30 different menu options for the month, students have the opportunity to try new flavors every day, giving everyone on campus a chance to try something new.

The most important thing to remember when cooking is to make sure your food is full of flavor, because students like every option. If your food has good flavor, that’s what makes people buy it,” said Attelus.

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