Audit reveals protected data at risk in College of Medicine

ALYSSA ELSO
Contributing Writer

The Office of Internal Audit’s 2012-2013 report of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine reveals flaws within the Information Systems Security Controls, which has set the college’s protected data at risk of inappropriate disclosure.

According to the administrative controls section of the audit, which is responsible for managing the conduct of personnel in relation to the protection of data and the maintenance of security measures to protect sensitive data, the College of Medicine’s Department of Human Resources recruitment and termination process was in need of improvement.

In fall 2009, the College of Medicine’s Information Technology Department consisted of five staff members. In 2011-2012, with an approved budget of over $1 million, the staff grew to nine employees.

Human Resources, in the recruitment process, must ensure that background checks are performed on all candidates. While they can meet the necessary skills listed to perform job duties and take prudent action in regards to employee separation, the disabling of user accounts, handled by University Technology Services, should have also been completed within a timely manner, yet six of the 22 former employees were still enabled in the system’s active directory at the time of the audit.

Human Resources Director for the College of Medicine Ana Poveda and Office of Internal Audit Director Allen Vann were still enabled in the system’s active directory.

The audit of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Information Systems Security Controls was completed in October 2012 and included information gathered from June 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011.

As a newly established college, the audit was created to determine whether established internal security controls and procedures over protected data were effective, adhered to and followed with University policies, rules and regulations.

The report found that IT controls were in need of improvement to reduce the risk of data breaches and increase the confidentiality of sensitive data. Of the 42 activities tested, 25 needed improvement to effectively function.

To improve the function of these systems and decrease the risk of unauthorized disclosure of protected data, the Office of Internal Audit recommended that security awareness training be established, provided to staff members and periodically evaluated to ensure that it is effective and up to date.

In response to findings and recommendations reported in the audit, management responded with a plan of action to improve IT controls.

According to the audit, Human Resources completed a background check on the director of IT in August 2012. In June 2011, they created one standardized separation of employment checklist. They have been working to ensure that employees’ access is disabled within a regular schedule as well as creating various security training programs that are available to staff and will continue to work to improve the protection of sensitive data.

Law school applications at a 30-year low nationally

VICTORIA RONDEROS
Contributing Writer

This year, according to the Law School Admissions Council, law school applications have hit a 30-year low. In 2004, there were 100,000 applications, however, this year, the LSAC predicts that 100,000 applications, however, 30-year low. In 2004, there were 100,000 applications, however, 30-year low.

According to the FIU Law Viewbook and fact sheets provided by the College of Law, in 2010, the University had admitted about 19.68 percent of their applicants, in 2012, they accepted about 19.68 percent of their applicants.

In 2012, the tuition became $18,463.

There is an abundance of lawyers who work in the corporate world, and a demand for lawyers for those outside the corporate and wealthy world, who usually need more legal advice and help than corporations, but can’t afford to pay them.

These tend to be the poor, the low-income, and sometimes middle-class people and families.

“Lawyers aren’t evenly distributed. If you’re wealthy, or if you’re a business or a corporation, you can easily pay for legal help, but if you’re somebody who’s middle-class or low-income or poor, you often don’t have access to a lawyer,” said Peggy Maisel, a law professor and the director of the Clinical Program of the College of Law.

Maisel’s program helps those in need. Those who cannot afford lawyers usually seek legal advice and representation with law clinics, which are located in many law schools.

Clinics have become a relatively new part of the legal curricula in the United States, creating hands-on training for students, which benefits students, the public and law firms seeking new employees with experience.

Law students and professors run them and they provide free legal advice and representation to those in need.

“Students want to be able to make a living and students have different things that they want to do, but my experience is that, most law students coming into law school really want to help people, so through the clinics and the legal work they’re doing, they’re learning a tremendous amount, but they’re also really helping. They’re representing people who wouldn’t otherwise be represented, which I think an awful lot of law students really want to be doing,” said Maisel.

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Monday, February 18, 2013

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A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University
A meteor streaked across the sky and exploded over the Ural Mountains with the power of an atomic bomb Friday, its sonic blasts shattering countless windows and injuring about 1,100 people.

The spectacle deeply frightened many Russians, with some elderly women declaring that the world was coming to an end. Many of the injured were cut by flying glass as they flocked to windows, cursing at what had produced such a blinding flash of light.

The meteor — estimated to be about 10 tons — entered the atmosphere at a supersonic speed of at least 54,000 kph (33,000 mph) and shattered into pieces about 30-50 kilometers (18-32 miles) above the ground, the Russian Academy of Sciences said in a statement.

Photos of Hugo Chavez shown after officers including Mexican Federal Police arrested this week in Cancun, Mexico, and is that 61-year-old Manuel Lopez-Castro was being held in Mexico.

Police in Belarus are going after gays, raiding their clubs and locking up clubbers overnight, and summoning gay activists for questioning. One activist accuses police of beating him during questioning, while others say they were interrogated about their sex lives. The leader of a gay rights organization was stripped of his passport just ahead of a planned trip to the United States.

That is the government’s response to a decision by gay activists across the country to try in January to legally register their rights organization, GayBelarus. It marked a more resolute attempt to emerge from the shadows after being slapped down repeatedly by the authorities.

Gays in Belarus face reprisals for activism.

Bryan Palacio Contributing Writer

On Feb. 6, a University attendant couldn’t help but notice a marijuana odor coming from a suspicious package in the University Park Towers mailroom.

The package was labeled to former FIU football player Caylin Hauptmann from a sender with the same last name in Beverly Hills, Calif.

The attendant quickly alerted Resident Assistant Francis Copeland who then called the FIU Police Department to investigate. One of the officers observed the same smell emanating from the package.

According to the completed investigation, FIUPD sent two officers to Hauptmann’s dorm. When the two officers arrived, they noted the handle on the door had been dislodged. Fearing a burglary, they received clearance from the RA to enter, finding Prince Matt, a redshirt freshman offensive lineman on the football team and resident of the dorm, in the common area of the room.

FIUPD entered Matt’s room and once inside found five mari-juana stems in plain view. Matt immediately admitted to possess-
ing the marijuana stems and was placed under arrest. He was booked at 3:24 a.m. on Feb. 7, on $1,000 bond. The case was later settled for $50 and closed the same day, according to Miami-Dade public records.

The same day, Caylin’s father, George Hauptmann, called FIUPD and advised that his son was going to pick up the package but expressed concerns that it might have been a package sent by Caylin’s mother addressed to Caylin.

George Hauptmann was then informed of the situation. Caylin Hauptmann never reported to FIUPD to retrieve his package. On Feb 8, George Hauptmann called FIUPD on behalf of his son, Caylin, and said that Caylin did not want the package because it was tampered and that he did not want anything to do with the package reference, fearing it’ll hurt Caylin’s chances of being drafted in the NFL.

The package contained the following: five bags of potato chips, two photos, a card, a check from Bank of America in the amount of $575 from his father’s account, and one gram of medical cannabis.

A banker and attorney on the run for 26 years after his conviction in a major South Florida marijuana smuggling case has been captured in Florida.

The U.S. Marshals Service reported Thursday that 61-year-old Manuel Lopez-Castro was arrested this week in Cancun, Mexico, and is back in Miami to face justice. Lopez-Castro fled in 1986 rather than show up at a Florida prison back in Miami to face justice. Lopez-Castro fled arrest in 1986 rather than show up at a Florida prison back in Miami to face justice.

In 1986, Lopez-Castro was booked at 3:24 a.m. on Feb. 7, on $1,000 bond. The case was later settled for $50 and closed the same day, according to Miami-Dade public records.

“The there are so many people around that if something were to happen, someone would tell me who stole my stuff,” Garrison said. “I feel like people are too much into their own things like studying or doing homework to steal someone’s stuff.”

OUT OF THE 43 REPORTED THEFTS ON THE UNIVERSITY PARK TOWERS MAILROOM PENTHOUSE IN FIU’S BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS FOR THE WEEK OF FEB. 4 TO FEB. 10, THE BEACON CONFIRMS THAT 32 WERE MILLIONAIRES, 31 WERE MILLIONAIRES, AND 1 WAS A MILLIONAIRE.

Player arrested for marijuana

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

Fla. fugitive caught after 26 years on lam

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 24, Issue 63 in the article titled “New generation of players set to open baseball season” On page 6, the story incorrectly writes that the FIU base-ball team was 32-36 in 2012, but they were 32-26. Also, The LeBron James photo on page 7 incor-rectly associates Alan Diaz with The Beacon.

343 reported thefts on campus since beginning of spring semester

43 reported thefts on campus since beginning of spring semester

The Beacon – Monday, February 18, 2013 www.fiusm.com

We consider taking all their belongings with them at all times.

Whether it’s a two-minute bath-room or coffee break, students should never leave their valuables unattended.

Despite thieves taking advantage of students leaving their stuff unattended, junior and psychology major Melissa Garrison does not buy into that solution, noting that students should be more responsible and even though it may be a hassle, they should

JONATHAN JACOBSKIND Staff Writer

Students may think twice about leaving their valuables unattended. According to the FIU Police Depart-ment crime logs, there have been a total of 43 reported theft crimes since the beginning of the semester. Out of the 43 reported theft crimes, 18 have had a preference for electronics. Ten of the 20 theft crimes ranged from textbooks and wallets to a bicycle and someone’s identity. As for the electronics, Chief of Police Alexander D. Casas spoke about several recent reports of laptops, cell phones and other electronics being stolen

Walter Reade/Getty Images

Walter Reade/Getty Images

Player arrested for marijuana

Player arrested for marijuana

Beyond the loss of Caylin Hauptmann, the case has been a major blow to FIU as well.

President Mark Rosenberg has said the shooting will have a negative impact on the school and that the university needs to take responsibility.

Caylin Hauptmann never reported to FIUPD to retrieve his package. On Feb 8, George Hauptmann called FIUPD on behalf of his son, Caylin, and said that Caylin did not want the package because it was tampered and that he did not want anything to do with the package reference, fearing it’ll hurt Caylin’s chances of being drafted in the NFL.

The package contained the following: five bags of potato chips, two photos, a card, a check from Bank of America in the amount of $575 from his father’s account, and one gram of medical cannabis.

The sports information department would not comment on Matt’s status on the team, referring Student Media to their Feb.7 statement of not commenting on incidents still under investigation.

Player arrested for marijuana

Player arrested for marijuana
In light of the recent school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut—and other shootings in Colorado, Arizona, and Texas—there have been changes initiated in 49 states to allow teachers to carry guns for the purchasing of firearms and ammunition.

Other issues have prevailed. A New York newspaper, the Journal News, was highly criticized for publishing names and addresses of gun owners. Some view this as a necessity. Others view it as a violation of the Second Amendment as well as a violation of their privacy.

But when your actions begin to infringe on the freedoms and safety of others, it becomes a problem. Another issue of grave concern related to gun control is the issue of gun control will not be solved by giving teachers access to guns. Simply arming instructors with guns will not address the crux of the problem.

Training teachers in ammunition (gun) use is not a solution to the problem at hand,” said Martha Baranovich, professor in the College of Education. “There are plenty of teachers that already have training and know how to properly use guns.”

According to Baranovich, there needs to be a collective, thoughtful discussion on how to address the many issues that are present in our society that led up to the massacre of children. This is not a simple question and does not have a simple answer.

“Let’s increase the background checks, counseling to students, etc. along with banning assault weapons,” said Associate Professor Janvier Gasana in the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work. In addition to the stricter gun laws alluded to before, it starts with the children at home.

What is the underlying cause of these children becoming violent? Does it stem from violent media exposure? Playing violent video games? Do these children have behavioral problems or come from violent/broken homes? Perhaps proper counseling would suffice.

What is certain is that arming teachers will not solve the problem. We cannot combat violence with violence. It must begin with compassion.

Brian Anderson
Contributing Writer

Teaching our school about transparency

The campus hall looked different. Last summer, I saw one vendor selling jewelry on the hallway of Wolfe University Center. Things have changed. Now, I see at least three to four different vendors dominating the area in the middle where the crossing halls intersect. I was hoping the vendors would have some philanthropic purposes, but I found no affiliation with charity or other causes. It was purely for profit. It raised a little concern. I had a notion that students have rights and phone number.

I obtained her card before leaving the building. Ms. Propis, then, demanded my name and phone number.

“I bring up my concerns to her and asked—what kind of country have we become when we are even consid- ering arming teachers with guns for the protection of pupils?”

Diallo is not the only one who shares this perspective. According to a recent poll by the Connecticut Education Association, of 400 teachers, only 3 percent of educators favored arming teachers with guns, while 85 percent opposed. Within the same study, 98 percent of educators favored extensive criminal and mental health background checks for all gun purchasers.

This debate prompts one to ask—what kind of country have we become when we are even consid- ering arming teachers with guns for the protection of pupils?

According to the faculty, it is possible that students’ personal information can be distrib- uted to third party with or without students’ consent. I wish the same for my fellow students. Perhaps, my intentions were the core values of FIU: “truth” in the pursuit and application of knowledge and “freedom” of thought and expression. We must not stop questioning and fighting for our basic rights. It shall happen in the moment of “now” and the place called “here.”

Send us your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual. micheal.baisden@fiusm.com

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Frost raising money to conserve a sculpture

ALFREDO APARICIO Staff Writer

The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum is launching an S.O.S campaign to save “Journey’s End, 1985,” a sculpture by New York-based artist Ian Averbuch. The piece has been at the University for 16 years since it was donated by the Miami-based art collector, Martin Z. Margulies, in 1997.

The piece, made from the granite of demolished New York City buildings, draws inspiration from the city of New York itself and brings to mind the idea of death as the ship symbolizes the human rib cage as well as a coffin.

The campaign, entitled “Save Our Sculpture,” came about after an assessment in 2009 by an art conservator who indicated that the sculpture was in need of conservation. The piece’s condition has only worsened, suffering from decay and falling timber because of its exposure to South Florida’s unforgiving elements.

“When Alexander [Garcia] heard the work was damaged, he became aware of the fact that we could fix it,” said Carol Damian, director and chief curator at the Frost.

It was then that the Frost decided to take action by starting a fundraising and awareness campaign that could raise the $60,000 needed to conserve the sculpture. “It has always been a priority,” said Digital Archivist Alexander Garcia, who has led the campaign from its inception. “When the timber fell a month before Art Basel, that’s when we took the initiative to raise awareness and do something immediately because it became a public safety issue.”

People visiting the sculpture could be injured if a piece were to fall on them.

The fundraising campaign will take place during the Frost’s revamped after hours program, De-Frost After Hours, which came about after Target’s sponsorship became unavailable this year.

The idea sprung from various meetings between staff members at the Frost as they searched for an event that would be educational and attractive to the student body, as well as the faculty and staff.

“We don’t have the funds to conserve it ourselves so it seemed like an opportunity that would benefit all those involved,” Damian said.

For Garcia, the event’s networking opportunities will serve as a big incentive for the Frost to have the strong, professional presence of the university after their recent opening, as well as Beck’s brand beer and wine, an aspect of the event that draws inspiration from other social events at museums around South Florida, like History-Miami’s “Wine Down Wednesdays” and the Lowe Museum’s “LoweDown Happy Hour.”

“We never served alcohol in Target Wednesdays, but it’s an existing formula around the city and we are trying to give the FIU community the same experience,” said Garcia. “For students it will be a chance to learn how to have a drink and hold a conversation. A lot of events for young professionals have a liquor aspect so it’s about learning how to not go overboard and just have one drink the whole night while networking.”

Besides being a pun on the Frost’s name, the title of the campaign – De-Frost After Hours – makes it approachable for those who have already been to a fundraising event before or a museum.

“It’s a fresh, new and exciting title, but, after thinking about it, it shows the event is about weather in other words, that we don’t need to care about weather in other places because it is all connected.”

Garcia admits that many of these threats have already been set in motion and that it would take drastic steps to incur change but he provided some solutions to the climate change problem. “We need to lower our individual carbon footprint. Which means driving less, being less consumers and eating lower on the food chain, so eating less meats or no meats. But ultimately, to really improve the world’s situation, a large-scale group effort is required.”

“We need to push as individuals to lower our community footprint. We need to push the administra
tion to make [FIU] a greener university and we need to vote for people that will make it a greener community.”

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Professor studies climate change on Amazon rainforest

DANIEL URIA Staff Writer

The Amazon rainforest, a place imagined to be lush, wet and full of vegetation, is beginning to dry out.

Kenneth Feeley, assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, is involved in studying how the vegetation of the forests is acclimating due to climate change.

Feeley has worked as an assistant professor at the university since 2009, but apart from his work at FIU, he has also participated in extensive research of vegetation in the Amazon.

“All of my research is focused on trying to understand the effects that humans have on tropical forests,” he said.

Feeley and his team have spent time periodically tracking changes in trees near the slopes of the Andes Mountains in Peru.

“We set up plots in the forest where we measure everything we can about the forest. We measure how big the trees are, what species they are and where they occur,” he said.

Through this process, Feeley has found that climate change is in fact affecting the vegetation in the area.

“We found some results that trees are growing slower than they used to. In some species, individual trees are dying faster than they used to,” he said.

However, Feeley explained that one of the most interesting developments was where the trees were growing along the slope of the mountain.

This phenomenon is known as species migration. “This doesn’t mean that a tree has picked up and moved” Feeley said.

“But the next generation of trees is growing higher and higher on the mountain. How long these trees will be able to sustain this behavior before either falling victim to the increase in temperature or no longer having the ability to acclimate all depends on a point called the timberline.”

“We’ve found is that the timberline, that point where the trees stop growing, might be the key to all of this. If it stays where it is right now, then we predict losing lots of species,” he said. “If, on the other hand, that barrier moves with the warming, then species can actually spread out. And, in some cases, species can actually benefit under climate change.”

Feeley credits his interest in environmental studies from a longstanding love of the outdoors.

“Even before going to college I was really interested in nature,” he said. “And even more than nature just being outside.”

While studying abroad in Costa Rica as an undergraduate, Feeley fell in love with the field due to the pure beauty of the tropical ecology. “I was looking at it not so much as we were going to save the world, but it was going to be an enjoyable experience.”

But soon Feeley found that he couldn’t ignore that deforestation and climate change had eliminated the concept of a pristine rain forest, which caused his focus to working to reverse these effects.

While the natural beauty of the rainforest is what drew Feeley into this study, he stresses that the devastation being caused by climate change has far further reaching effects.

“We’re losing lots of species. We’re seeing increasing food scarcity, we’re seeing all kinds of problems playing out.”

The rainforest also provides several valuable ecosystem services “The forest cleans our air, filters water, acts as an air purifier and creates it’s own weather,” he said.

Feeley stressed that the loss of these services particularly the effects on weather can have global effects.

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-alexander.garcia@fiusm.com

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Land Art/Earth Art class introduces yarn bombing

JACQUELINE ROSADO
Contributing Writer

Graffiti art doesn’t always come out of a spray can. This year, graffiti art is coming to the Biscayne Bay campus – in the form of yarn.

According to Associate Professor Pip Brant, yarn bombing is a type of temporary graffiti that started in 2004 – temporary meaning that it’s not permanent or destructive because it can be removed from the land or object it is covering.

People started crocheting with yarn and wrapping it with objects to symbolize repairing. Brant explained that there is a comfort quality in the material of yarn that makes yarn bombing a metaphor of comfort.

Andrea Wolverton, a senior and physics major, has been yarn bombing for over two years and is contributing her work to the University through Brant’s Land Art/Earth Art class.

Brant’s Land Art/Earth Art class was introduced last year and started in spring 2013. It is not exclusively for art majors and Brant’s class consists of all kinds of majors.

Wolverton explained that land art is anything that interacts with or changes with the environment and the land; it’s “ecoventional.”

“Yarn bombing does that,” said Wolverton. “Our class’ goal is to make art sustainable, and the land; it’s ‘ecoventional.’”

“Land art has a utilitarian purpose and some people are involved in separate projects that involve yarn bombing because Wolverton taught the rest of the class how to crochet with a guest artist.

Wolverton’s latest yarn bombing project is covering the four guard poles at BBC in yarn. Wolverton added that a project like this usually takes three to four months to complete because there are so many colors and patterns that need to be utilized.

“I’m working really fast to get it done [within this semester],” said Wolverton.

Wolverton recalled her first time yarn bombing in the University, voluntarily. It took place two years ago on the Modesto Maidique Campus, where she yarn bombed the Chemistry and Physics building with crocheted hearts on Valentine’s Day.

Wolverton was surprised and happy to see students walk off with the hearts and take them home, which encouraged Wolverton to continue yarn bombing.

“There is this excitement that comes with it and also anticipation because you want to see the looks on people’s faces when they pass by a public area that was unexpectedly yarn bomb,” said Wolverton. “I feel accomplished when I get it done and people get to see it. I enjoy it and I hope that the people that come across it enjoy it too.”

Brant adds that land art is fun and livens up the place. According to her, it makes you aware of the spaces surrounding an individual.

“Land art has a utilitarian purpose and sometimes you don’t notice it. Using crochet adds a little bit of awareness to objects that you don’t tend to notice before,” said Brant.

SGA BUDGET HEARINGS & DELIBERATIONS

Deliberations at BBC: University Wide
Feb 19 / 2:00pm to 8:00pm / WUC 221

Hearings: MMC Campus Specific
Feb 20 / 9:00 to 5:00pm / Meeting in GC 241A

Tentative

Deliberations at MMC: University Wide
Feb 23 / 8:00am to 1:00pm / GC 1235

Deliberations: MMC Campus Specific
Feb 27 / 12:00pm to 6:00pm / GC 211A
Sand volleyball kicks off season in less than two weeks

DANIEL BREY 
Contributing Writer

With sand between their toes, a pair of sunglasses, and the first ever sand volleyball schedule now at hand, Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett and the team have their eyes set on what Buck-Crockett feels is the first serve of a fraction of what it once was.

“Our number one goal is to start the program winning tradition here at FIU,” Buck-Crockett said. “The ultimate goal however, is to bring home a national championship.”

The inaugural season is set to begin on the road March 8 as Panthers take their talents to Los Angeles, Calif. in a dual against Grand Canyon University. GCU, also digging into their first year of sand volleyball competition, is led by GCU indoor volleyball legend Head Coach Kris Naber.

“I am not familiar with the career Naber has had, however, I do hold a great deal of respect for all coaches in their first year of competition,” Buck-Crockett said. “Along with our program, these first year teams will surely help us transition to the sand volleyball game.”

On March 9, the Panthers will travel west to the white beaches of Malibu, Calif. to battle defending AVCA Collegiate Sand Volleyball National Champion, Pepperdine University, in what can only be described as a David versus Goliath match.

Pepperdine currently holds five players that stand six feet or taller, which is double that of FIU’s roster.

The question of whether the Panthers will be able to compete with Pepperdine is not a concern for Buck-Crockett.

“I feel we will be able to match-up with Pepperdine,” Buck-Crockett said. “We have some very athletic players who can cover a lot of ground which will make up the lack of height,” she said.

The road will not get any easier for FIU when they go against last year’s national runner-up, Long Beach State, on March 13.

“We want to play against the top teams,” Buck-Crockett said. “What better way of knowing where we are as a team than to compete with schools like Pepperdine, Long Beach State and Hawaii.”

FIU will continue their west coast trip when they travel to the Aloha State on March 15 to take on Hawaii.

On March 16, the Panthers will get a taste of tournament play when they face Hawaii, along with Chaminade and Hawaii Pacific, in the Hawaii tournament.

With just four full days of rest leading up to the tournament, fatigue will not play a factor for the Panthers, according to Buck-Crockett.

“Our training staff has done a marvelous job of keeping the team in shape.” Buck-Crockett said. “I do not think fatigue will play a factor in our performance during that stretch of the season.”

After the tournament, FIU will travel back to Miami to host Webber International University in what will be the first sand volleyball match ever played at FIU.

The match will be played on March 23 at 9 a.m. on the sand volleyball courts, located between the Panther Parking Garage and the tennis courts at the Modesto Maidique Campus.

The Panthers will host the first annual Surf and Turf Tournament featuring some of the nation’s top teams such as Pepperdine, Tulane, Florida Atlantic, and Georgia State starting March 29 through March 31 on the sand volleyball courts.

All games played on March 30, however, will take place at a location yet to be determined.

The Panthers play their final home game on April 6 at 6 p.m. against Florida Gulf Coast, and will then travel to Siesta Key, Fla. to compete in the 2013 Fiesta on Siesta Key Tournament held from April 13-14.

A scrimmage against Stetson on April 27 will mark the final chapter in the historic inaugural season for FIU unless they qualify to compete at the 2013 AVCA Collegiate Sand Volleyball Championships in Gulf Shores, Ala., which begins on May 3.

Before the inaugural season kicks off however, Coach Buck-Crockett and the sand volleyball team will host the first ever Blue & Gold Intrasquad Tournament on March 1 at 9 a.m. at the sand volleyball courts.

The tournament will feature the top five duo teams that will compete in the season opener at GCU, and a post-game autograph session.

RHYS WILLIAMS 
Contributing Writer

The FIU wrestling club is a fraction of what it once was.

The club has spiraled from 25 participants last year to having three to six members show up to meetings this year.

The only person left over from last year’s squad isn’t even from FIU. Frank Mora, who was unavailable for comment, is from Miami-Dade College.

The club is trying to get back to last year’s status with the help of freshman Jahrel Francis, a former two time all-state wrestler from Celebration High School in Kissimmee, Fla.

Francis turned down multiple offers from prestigious wrestling schools like Duke, University of Texas, Des Moines University and Appalachian State to wrestle in college for those who knew him to imagine his involvement with anything to do with wrestling when he got here to FIU.

“I knew that I wanted to have a life in college and I knew if I went to a school that I wouldn’t really have one,” Francis said. “Everyday it would be wake up, practice, class, practice, sleep and repeat. I wanted to continue wrestling but not make it my entire life.”

With a lot of skill in the sport, Francis brings experiences from some large tournaments.

“I went to the national meet in Fargo, N.D. last year and didn’t do too spectacular,” Francis said. “However, when I competed in a tournament in Puerto Rico I had a lot of fun, met people from around the world and brought home some hardware when I came in third place.”

Last fall, Julian Valhuerdi hopefully be attending FIU. He is on the second year of a wrestling scholarship in Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids, Minn.

Valhuerdi hopes that he can help continue the growth of the FIU wrestling club when he arrives in the fall.

“I will be doing it when I get back down there to Miami and helping it grow as much as I can,” Valhuerdi said.

Some of the members who are newer to the club are glad to be adding on, but are questioning how long it can last without some changes.

“It was great to get back into it after being out of a sport for a while,” said Christian Viera during his first day on Feb. 11. “There is a pretty high chance that I will go back again and I hope that it continues to grow because I love wrestling. I just hope the group gets more organized and bigger so it can be challenging and let me get as much enjoyment out of it that I did when I was competing.”

“No one has really been spreading the word about it. I know that I am going to tell all my friends who have any idea about wrestling to come by,” said another club member, Jose Arrastia. “Anything that helps to make it more exciting is fine by me.”

These men are in it for the sport, but they all have a passion.

“It is just you and another guy out on the mat,” said Valhuerdi. “When you have so many people watching you, it gets crazy and your blood starts pumping. You get a high and it is one of the greatest feelings in the world.”

For more information on the FIU wrestling club, contact Jahrel Francis at jfran147@fiu.edu.

Freshman Business Administration Major Jahrel Francis, right, is in the middle of pinning Miami-Dade College’s Frank Mora during a practice at the FIU Recreation Center on Feb. 11. 

“Wrestling as a sport is very different than other sports. It challenges you mentally and physically. It changed my life and helped me become more of a man, made me disciplined and a lot more mature,” Valhuerdi said. “It has helped me see places I never would have seen, and gotten me through the first part of my collegiate career.”
Free of injuries, Panthers cruising to the finish line

RUBEN PALACIOS
Staff Writer

The women’s basketball team is back on cruise control after a two-game losing streak.

After consecutive conference losses to Middle Tennessee State University and University of Louisiana at Monroe that dropped them to 13-9 and 7-6 in the Sun Belt Conference, the Panthers find themselves on a three-game win streak and have improved to 16-9 (10-6 SBC).

After a home victory against rival Florida Atlantic University on Feb. 6, the Panthers hit the road and traveled to the University of North Texas and faced off against a familiar conference foe. FIU lost to North Texas in mid-January, but this time FIU got the best of the Mean Green and pulled out a 72-63 victory on Feb. 9.

The Panthers then traveled to Troy, Ala., where they picked up their third consecutive win with a 56-39 victory against the Trojans. The Panthers put on possibly their best defensive performance of the season in the win. Troy entered the contest averaging more than 70 points per game, but on this night FIU held them to nearly half their average.

“We are doing a really good job on the boards,” Head Coach Cindy Russo said. “And we are holding teams to a very low percentage and we have started to play really nice defense.”

BACK IN ONE PIECE

It is not a coincidence that the Panthers’ win streak started when seniors Finda Mansare and Diamond Ashmore returned to the squad after missing a number of games because of injury.

“I was concerned with getting my team back healthy,” Russo said. “And now we got our troops back.”

Mansare, a preseason Second Team All-Sun Belt Conference selection, has shot 45 percent from the field since her return to the team and has provided help on the front line that became awfully thin when she and Ashmore went down.

Ashmore has been playing superbly since her return. In her three games back, Ashmore shot an astounding 66 percent from the field and has snatched an average of seven rebounds per game. Ashmore also led the team in blocks in all three games since her return.

LOYAL AT THE TOP

Junior Jerica Coley still remains the leading scorer in the nation as of Feb. 15. The All-American candidate is averaging 25.4 points per game, a mark that sits two points per game higher than her closest competitor.

Coley is on quite a hot streak, even by her standards. She has scored in double-figures in 23 consecutive games and in 81 of 91 career contests. Through the first 25 games of the season, Coley regis-tered at least 20 points on 16 occasions.

Coley’s scoring is reaching monumental levels within the FIU ranks. With a 23 point performance against Troy on Feb. 14, it put her career point total at 1,931, a mark that ranks third all-time at FIU. Coley’s career scoring average of 21.2 points per game ranks second of all-time at FIU.

“It’s always good when you have Jerica Coley on your side,” Russo said. “She can win you some games.”

Coley is responsible for over more than 41 percent of FIU’s total offense this season, and is responsible for over 34 percent of FIU’s total points over her entire tenure at FIU.

The team has only three games left in the season and the next will be the last home game on Feb. 21 against the University of Little Rock Arkansas.

Stanton says he’s past anger over Marlins purge

STEVEN WINE
AP Staff

Miami Marlins slugger Giancarlo Stanton tried to show discipline as a hitter Friday, choosing a diplomatic description of the franchise’s latest dismantling.

He declined to say whether he would be willing to sign a long-term contract with the Marlins.

“Irate fans have used even more colorful adjectives, and shortly after the Marlins’ blockbuster trade last November that culmi-nated their purge of players, Stanton tweeted he was angry about the deal.”

The comments about the trade were Stanton’s first to the South Florida media since All-Star shortstop Jose Reyes and four other players were dealt to Toronto. The deal left Stanton as one of the Marlins’ few established players, and there were offseason questions about whether he might soon join the exodus.

He declined to say whether he would be willing to sign a long-term contract with the Marlins.

“I haven’t been offered one, so that decision isn’t ready yet,” he said.
Organization targets shrinking economy, youth unemployment

NYESHA GARBAND
Contributing Writer

Students are feeling the sting of a nonexistent income and the desperation that comes with looking for alternative means of living.

Jobs for college students, like sophomore business major Jorge Vazquez, are sporadic. Vazquez believes that it is unfair that young people have to compete with more experienced applicants.

“I believe that the job market has been stabilizing, not really getting better nor worse,” Vazquez said.

Generation Opportunity, a non-partisan organization, announced in early February that youth unemployment for 18-29 year olds for January 2013 increased to 13 percent, compared to 11.5 percent in December 2012 and the current national average – 7.9 percent.

This does not include the 1.7 million youth who have dropped out of the workforce, because of frustration and lack of jobs, making it 16.2 percent, according to Generation Opportunity.

“The study also shows that the youth unemployment rate for 18-29 year old African-Americans for January 2013 was 22.1 percent, 13 percent for Hispanics and 11.6 percent for women.”

As a result, a large number of young people are not able to apply skills from their education to a job, leaving the age group on the outside, looking in.

According to The Palm Beach Post, “Employers added 157,000 jobs last month, and hiring turned out to be healthier than previously thought at the end of 2012 just as the economy faced the threat of the “fiscal cliffs.”

However, hectic schedules and closures make it incredibly difficult for students to snag a job, when older job seekers do not face that issue.

As a result, young people are in stiff competition for jobs, internships and entry level jobs. And temporary, summer jobs are even harder to come by.

“My generation is suffering disproportionately,” director of national and state policy at Generation Opportunity, Terence Grado said in a press release.

“President Obama says young adults, read forums, and take action by sharing their stories from everyday life.”

This effort, called Tell Us About It, will reveal the real opportunity for the millions of young people who have great skills, are ready to contribute and have waited long enough.

Generation Opportunity is asking young people to take action by sharing their personal stories on its flagship Facebook page, Being American by GO, which has collected over 1,500,000 fans.

On the page, anyone can read the latest news affecting young adults, read forums, and meet people.

This effort, called Tell Us About It, will reveal the real opportunity for the millions of young people who have great skills, are ready to contribute and have waited long enough.

Cruise passengers became comrades on trip home

JAY REEVES AND BRENDA FARRINGTON
AP Writer

When their cruise ship lost power, passengers aboard the Carnival Triumph could have been sent adrift, not only for themselves and their loved ones.

Instead, they became comrades in a long, exhausting struggle to get home.

As ship conditions deteriorated, travelers formed Bible study groups, shared or traded precious supplies and even welcomed strangers into their private cabins. Long after they’ve returned to the everyday luxuries of hot showers and cold drinks, passengers said, they will remember the crew and the personal bonds formed during a cruel week at sea.

The tired passengers finally reached land Friday and gave a glimpse into the intensely uncomfortable journey they had endured.

Sandy Jackson, of Houston, was fortunate to have an upper-level room with a balcony and a breeze that kept the air in her cabin fresh. Rooms on the lower decks were too foul or stifling, so Jackson took in five people, including four strangers.

“We know one of us, the others were very good friends with now,” Jackson said. “Every one was very cordial in sharing supplies. What you had and they didn’t have, everyone shared as much as possible.”

Brandi Denneit, of Sweeny, Texas, said people were antsy and irritable at times, and there was tension. But it never got out of hand.

“People were bartering. Can I have your cereal for this? Can I have your drink for that?” she said. “We had one lady, she was begging for cigarettes for diapers. There were no diapers on the boat. There was no formula on the boat.”

The ship left Galveston, Texas, on Feb. 17 for a four-day jaunt to Cozumel, Mexico. An engine-room fire early Sunday paralyzed ship, leaving it adrift in the Gulf of Mexico until tugboats towed the massive 134-story vessel to Mobile. It arrived late Thursday to cheers and flashing cameras.

Sweet Home Alabama?” read one of the homemade signs passengers hung over the side.

Many of the more than 4,200 passengers aboard were headed to New Orleans to catch a flight home or to the ship’s home port in Galveston.

And as if they hadn’t suffered enough, one of the buses broke down during the two-hour ride to New Orleans. Passengers on a different bus reported losing their luggage.

But that was nothing compared to life on the crippled cruise liner. To pass the time, Joseph Alvarez said about 45 people gathered in a public room on the lower deck for Bible study.

“It was awesome,” he said. “It lifted up our souls and gave us hope that we would get back.”

Because many passengers were sleeping on the outside deck, Dwayne Chapman of Lake Charles, La., used his pocket knife to cut decorative rope to make tents out of bed sheets.

At first, other passengers told him they thought he was going to get in trouble, but later, everyone wanted to borrow his knife to do the same thing.

“I really think we’ve made some lifelong friends going through this ordeal,” Chapman’s wife, Kim, said.

When it was over, many passengers were just grateful for some simple pleasures. After days of warm drinks, Cheryl McIntosh and her husband were glad to see coolers full of ice.

“The first thing we did was open up those Diet Cokes and we drank some,” McIntosh said.

Tugs pulled the ship away from the dock Friday, moving it down a waterway to a shipyard where it will be repaired. Carnival spokesman Vance Gulliksen said the damage assessment was ongoing.

The cleanup seemed daunting. Passengers described waterlogged carpet, sewage seeping through the walls, overflowing toilets and a stench so bad people choked when they tried to endure it.

But by most accounts, the cruise did as much as they could, using disinfectant and picking up plastic bags of feces after toilets stopped working.

David Glocker, of Jacksonville, Fla., praised the crew’s efforts to help passengers and recognized the conditions for them were worse than for most passengers because their quarters were on the lowest part of the ship.

“The conditions down there were horrible. They all had to wear masks,” he said. “They worked their butts off trying to get us food.”

Donsett praised a voice over the ship’s public address system that she knew as “Jim.”

“Jim was fabulous. I can remember her saying ‘Everything is brilliant!’” Donsett said. “One day, she was just talking and she said, ‘I know, folks, it just really sucks.’ So she was even letting go. She would try to keep that happy spirit, but yet sometimes you could hear tension in her.”