The Beacon, January 28, 2015

Florida International University

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FIU to offer only daycare of its kind in U.S.

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Imagine having to travel to another continent to pursue studies in an academic discipline not offered in your country. For Harry Rhea, assistant professor of criminal justice, this was a reality he had to confront.

Although he wanted to pursue doctoral studies in international criminal justice, the only programs in the country were available to students with none being offered in the U.S. But that is about to change.

Starting in the fall semester of 2015, the University’s Department of Criminal Justice will be offering the nation’s first doctorate program in international crime and justice.

According to Rhea, who attended the National University of Ireland, Galway for doctoral studies, criminal justice curriculums in the United States feature a traditional approach to the discipline, offering courses that deal more with domestic affairs in the U.S., such as policing, court corrections, and juvenile justice.

His interest in international crime was piqued at the undergraduate level.

While pursuing a joint bachelor’s-master’s degree at Rutgers University, Rhea became acquainted with research topics in criminal justice that dealt with international law, genocide, and crimes against humanity, among others.

Generally, students in the U.S. who are interested in topics within the realm of international crime attend law school, according to Rhea. Unfortunately, the difference between attaining a law degree with a specialization in international crime and a doctoral degree in the same field is that law schools usually provide preparation to practice law on the subject, not to research it and perhaps become a government advisor or academic.

While researching doctoral programs in his desired field of study, Rhea set his sights on the National University of Ireland, which was home to one of the most prolific scholars in international law, William Schabas.

When travelling to Miami on a professional visit to the University, Rhea was astonished when Lisa Stolzenberg, chair of the Department of Criminal Justice, informed him that a doctoral program in international crime and justice was being considered.

“Within one second I knew I was taking the job,” said Rhea.

Rhea admitted that he saw an opportunity to expand the traditional criminal justice curriculum, stating that he saw it as a chance not to create a specialization in undergraduate studies, but a more elaborate and focused Ph.D. program.

The newest development from President Modesto A. Maidique’s office is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals student program.

According to Rhea, border states, such as Florida, are rife with crimes of forced labor, human trafficking, and sexual slavery among others. Immigration issues are also common in the state, with many individuals seeking asylum within the peninsula’s borders.

“FIU... offers a great contribution to Miami and the state of Florida,” said Rhea, who cited that in the area will get the chance to not only study in Miami but perhaps also apply what is being learned in the classroom within the same city without having to relocate.

However, a lot of work did go into paving the way for the program’s existence.

According to Dr. Rob Guerre, associate professor of criminal justice, discussions on the creation of the doctoral degree started around 10 years ago.

Ph.D. programs have to be approved at the state level, and the Department of Criminal Justice needed to create a proposal for a doctoral program. There didn’t duplicate any already-existing programs in the state or country.

In the effort of trying to identify someone who had the idea for the program was the only one in the U.S., filling a unique niche to further the understanding of international crime and justice issues.

Various University committees, the Provost’s office, the Board of Governors of the University, and the state’s committee to approve that the program was unique.

Lisa Stolzenberg, along with Rhea and others, spearheaded the efforts to start the program, citing that the time was right—that the program went hand-in-hand with the University’s strategic global initiative.

As the doctoral degree program was initially proposed as an online program, it was important to have more than one person involved.

Once it was decided to be an on-site degree, it was approved.

The doctoral degree in international crime and justice will be open in the fall semester of 2015.

Regardless of one’s undergraduate preparation, those interested in the topics covered within the program can already start applying.

University to host deferred action seminar in GC

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Last fall the University’s chapter of Students Working for Equal Rights, an organization that seeks to garner support for the rights of undocumented individuals, celebrated FIU becoming Florida’s first public college to offer an out-of-state Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals student program.

In spreading the word for the announcement last year, SWER held information sessions to inform students about the requirements for the program. This semester the organization has more information to share.

In keeping with its commitment to helping undocumented individuals, the organization seeks to provide other forms of support for those who can benefit from services such as the DACA program.

The newest development from President Barack Obama’s executive action is the Deferred Action Parental Accountability program, which serves to extend the benefits of DACA to eligible undocumented individuals’ parents.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, those who qualify for deferred action must prove to be no risk to national security or public safety, and must abide by several rules and regulations. The DACA program essentially allows children that were brought to the country before reaching 16 years of age to remain within the U.S.

Although the DACA program was accepted and passed at the executive level by President Obama, some congressional leaders still aim to do away with the program. According to Galaz, DACA gives children the hope to continue studying in the U.S. and the opportunity to work and remain in America for a certain period of time without the risk of removal proceedings from the country.

Despite the fact that the deferred action program is school-grounded in America, children remain in the United States for a certain period of time, it does not provide a “lawful status” to those who are approved.

“All of students and a lot of students’ parents would qualify for deferred action programs such as DACA and DAPs if they became aware of the procedures and qualifications that Galaz said.

At this time, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is not accepting new applications for DAPA or the expanded DACA, according to the program.

Only renewals are allowed from those that qualified in the June 2012 DACA criteria.

With these new developments, activists await the final announcement of the DACA and DAPA passing. DACA begins accepting applications on Feb. 20, 2015, and DAPA on May 20, 2015.

However, the acceptance of these bills is still pending, as Congress can still veto the programs.

Galaz, as well as the members of FIU’s SWER, as leaders activists for FIU, are currently lobbying against the bills for these programs.

Whatever background is what inspired him to become an activist.

Having been born and raised in Chile, and having moved to America eight years ago, Galaz recently attended his residency. His largest concern is that those who qualify are aware of the laws currently are and what steps should be taken to handle their immigration status.

“We don’t want people going to public notaries or immigration consultants and giving them money, thinking they’ll get something in return,” he said.

“If someone needs help with this matter, they should visit a certified immigration lawyer only.”

He says these commons commonly take money from people who are simply just trying to get help with their situation. SWER will be hosting a public seminar on the topic of deferred action on Jan. 31, 2015, at the Rec Center at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus at 11 a.m. This informational session will give further insight and details for deferred action.

“Even though immigration reform hasn’t been possible yet, I’m grateful that the President was able to pass these laws,” said Galaz. “It’s just for a step closer in the right direction. We need to keep fighting for those who don’t have a voice.”

University to host deferred action seminar in GC

The Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) will be open to individuals who:

• Have a U.S. citizen or legal permanent son or daughter as of November 24, 2014
• Have continuously resided in the United States since before January 1, 2010
• Are physically present in the United States on November 20, 2014, and at the time of applying
• Have no lawful immigration status on November 20, 2014
• Are not an enforcement priority, which is defined to include individuals with a wide range of criminal convictions (including certain misdemeanors), those suspected of giving involvement and terrorism; recent unlawful entrant, and certain other immigration law violators
• Present no other factors that would warrant a grant of deferred action inappropriate
• Pass a background check

The parents of University students hoping to be eligible for deferred action must meet the following requirements.
LIBYAN OIL PRODUCTION PLUMMETS AS TRIBES FIGHT TO CONTROL FIELD IN SOUTH

Ubani, a ramshackle desert hub hundreds of miles from Libya’s populous cities on the Mediterranean coast, was once a favored tourist destination, a picturesque pocket of the Sahara with dramatic sand dunes, oases and volcanic mountains.

Now, however, it’s best-known for a bloody power struggle in the desert near the southern borders where Libya meets Algeria, Niger and Chad, a desolate expanse where Libya’s warring factions, unleashed by the revolt and NATO air campaign that toppled Moammar Gadhafi, battle for control of oil fields and smuggling routes.

A conflicted frontline from the nascent from the Moderate-Madique Camp was captured last Friday, two hours after an University alert was released. On Jan. 23, at 12:14 p.m., the University issued an FIU Alert stating Miami-Dade Police were searching for a 190 lb. white, barefoot male with a face tattoo and in a hospital gown at Southwest 107th Avenue and Eighth Street, 16 miles from MMC.

Nearly an hour later, at 1:04 p.m. another FIU Alert was issued that read, “ALL CLEAR RESUME NORMAL ACTIVITIES.” The suspect on the loose was Ivan Zapata, a 21-year-old man who escaped officer custody while being transported from Kendall Regional Medical Center at 11:40, Friday morning. Zapata proceeded to steal a black Mercedes from a woman in the hospital parking garage and took off. Shortly after, the vehicle was found near the University at the location issued in the alert.

Once local police departments were notified of Zapata’s escape, Southwest 127th and 137th avenues and Eighth and 18th streets were sectioned off to continue the search. At 2:22 p.m., about an hour after the University issued its last alert, Zapata was found in a house within the area sectioned of and was captured.

The off-campus residence hall 109 Towers, located at 737 Southwest and 109th Avenue, implemented a temporary lockdown during the manhunt. “We locked our doors and monitored who came and left,” said Grant Berman, 109 Tower resident services manager.

Berman said a moderate lockdown was in effect when employees saw police activity in the area and were informed by officers of the situation.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.
Media priming helps and hinders freedom of speech

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The role of mass media and its different platforms like television, radio and newspapers, has recently been at the forefront of its own exertion of freedom of speech. It is true that the media, especially the well known news sources, drives the discourse on culture and society. This type of influence is called priming or media priming. Priming is the duration of an issue, or the amount of time the media keeps information alive and how often they provide it. The longer the media devotes itself to that issue, the stronger the public view will become. The recent events of the Sony Entertainment hacking by North Korea and the horrible terrorist attack in Paris have changed the way priming affects freedom of speech, which is a journalist’s number one right. Although freedom of speech is evidently necessary, it goes to show how unfortunate it can turn out. Each person should be able to write, say, and draw what they please without waiting for a violent death. The hacking of Sony was not in any way physically violent but it jeopardized the public safe and did not contribute to the distribution of hacked information. Media coverage dedicated most of the cyberattack controversy to the release of the comedy film “The Interview,” based on the assassination of North Korea’s leader Kim Jon-un. Major theater companies were fearful of terrorist attacks and only limited theaters released the movie. Shortly after the debate to release the film, media coverage noticeably died down. A limited showing of the film was a good decision but the hackers ultimately threatened our right of expression. The lack of media coverage towards the end, in a way, kept cultural and religious humor. Printing weekly, it keeps current news alive. The Islamic extremists who killed 12 people at Charlie Hebdo had a vendetta against freedom of expression. It built intimidation within every facet of the media from the big news sources to small magazines like Charlie Hebdo.

Freedom of speech was violently shut down as this terrorist attack gruesomely let the world know not to insult their religion, not even by drawing. The mass media and even French citizens used this event to march the streets as a form of expression and resistance towards the attack and the importance of freedom of expression. In this case, media priming has not ceased. The mass media is so influential that it spreads a global stereotype of a culture, thereby linking an individual to that society. Satire is clearly not taken lightly but even at the risk of violence, freedom of speech must always triumph over any obstacles. The hacking of Sony was a cyber terror attack that challenged freedom of speech and media priming had to eventually lessen its influence on the public. Much like “The Interview,” French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo devotes itself to challenging public opinion through their political, reputations, jobs, personal information and businesses. Media coverage dedicated most of the cyberattack controversy to the release of the comedy film “The Interview,” based on the assassination of North Korea’s leader Kim Jon-un. Major theater companies were fearful of terrorist attacks and only limited theaters released the movie. Shortly after the debate to release the film, media coverage noticeably died down. A limited showing of the film was a good decision but the hackers ultimately threatened our right of expression. The lack of media coverage towards the end, in a way, kept cultural and religious humor. Printing weekly, it keeps current news alive. The Islamic extremists who killed 12 people at Charlie Hebdo had a vendetta against freedom of expression. It built intimidation within every facet of the media from the big news sources to small magazines like Charlie Hebdo.

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FRANK AND IRENE: Easily Offended

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Save Lolita movement sparks artistic expression and protests in Miami

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The five ton jade Buddha exhibiting at Ichimura Miami-Japanese Garden until Feb. 8 wasn’t the only massive display at the event.

A mural painted by Michael Gray, dedicated to the three ton orca whale named Lolita, made participants gaze into the eyes of an old whale currently living in Miami Seaquarium.

“This was painted in honor of the whale that’s here [Miami Seaquarium],” said Gray, 28. “She’s been here for 45 years and I painted this in honor of her situation.”

According to Gray, Lolita is the longest living whale in captivity and was captured in 1970 off of the northwestern coast in Washington when she was four years old, an age he feels was too young for her to have been removed from her family.

“Orcas travel in herds,” said Gray. “The whole purpose here is to raise awareness and have her transferred back with her cousins in Washington.”

Gray has his mural of Lolita inside The Bodhi Festival, a world peace art and spiritual-healing exhibition sponsored by the ChakraSamvara Center, a Buddhist healing center in Miami Beach.

The festival’s main attraction is the largest Buddha statue made entirely out of jade, which according to legend is said to possess healing powers.

Gray hopes his mural will spread not only energy but raise awareness of Lolita’s situation, similar to how her story affected many on Jan. 17, when hundreds of protesters marched from the entry of Key Biscayne to Miami Seaquarium.

Many of whom, were angry over the aquarium’s decision to place Lolita in a tank that did not reach the Occupational Safety and Health and Administration’s size regulations.

Michael Gray, a freelance visual artist, web designer and working graphic designer, shows off his mural of Lolita, the longest living orca in captivity.

According to Local10 News, Miami Seaquarium has been previously fined for $7000 by the OSHA for allowing trainers to work with a killer whale without sufficient protection.

Today, its employees can say they have worked with Lolita all their life. She is that old.

In an article posted by the Sun-Sentinel in 2010, the aquarium’s former general manager, Andrew Hertz, said Lolita has been hand-fed since her capture and would not be able to survive on her own in the ocean.

But still, protesters held signs reading “Free Lolita” or “Get the whale out of jail.” The protest was called Miracle March for Lolita and according to it’s fundraising page on GoFundMe.com the march raised almost $22,000 in donations.

Gray’s mural, though not part of Miracle March, is part of the non profit organization called the Peace Mural Foundation’s Ocean US project, which serves as a platform to bring awareness to all the damage of marine life through art.

You can see Gray’s mural at the Bodhi Festival on 1101 MacArthur Causeway (Parrot Jungle). The event is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets can be found at http://jadebuddhamiami.com/site/, or at the front door for $10 on the weekends and free admission on weekdays.

As confrontation escalates quickly to violence, Sam White captures the outbreak on footage for her film project to describe the current state of racial relations on campus.

This film comes equipped with an incredibly topical script, as Justin Simien, the film’s director, achieves a unique plot scheme embedded with real-world context that is difficult to digest in one sitting.

The dialogue is burdened with strong racially charged tones, and the scenes speak to real situations every student has witnessed. But more than a decomposition of racial relations on campus, DWP is a commentary on the challenges of forming individual identity in a culture that constantly stereotypes and encroaches self-discovery.

After the screening of the movie put on by SPC Friday, Jan. 23 in GC 140, students who attended had the chance to participate in a panel discussion about race. Those leading the panel were part of FIU’s Black Student Union and The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. You can listen to the discussion at FIUSM.com.

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‘Dear White People’ film makes ‘a cultural statement’

COLUMNIST

KATRINA VELIZ
University, a fictional Ivy
League, the film derives its
title from Sam White’s satirical
and racially provocative radio
show.

The plot is carried by four characters that struggle with their own stereotype casted
dynamics, DWP is a commentary
on the challenges of forming
individual identity in a culture
that constantly stereotypes and
encroaches self-discovery,

As a cultural s t a t e m e n t , “Dear White People” speaks volumes.

Tessa Thompson (bottom left) leads the satirical change in “Dear White People.”

‘Dear White People’ film makes ‘a cultural statement’

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LGBT professor is a positive role model

Dr. Julie Marie Wade is one of FIU’s many accomplished writers and poets. She has received eight Pushcart Prize nominations and in 2014, she received the To the Lighthouse Poetry Book Prize from the A Room of Her Own Foundation, a nonprofit organization working on behalf of women writers, for her poetry collection, “SIX.”

In spring 2016, her collection of lyric essays, “Catechism: A Love Story,” will be published by Nocturny Press. She also coordinates the FIU Writers on the Bay, at the Biscayne Bay Campus, which brings novelists, memoirists and poets to FIU to read from their books and engage in substantive discussions about literature and the processes of writing.

Wade is an openly lesbian professor and writes extensively about her coming out experiences, the dichotomy of gender, the epiphanic moments that helped her realize her sexual identity, the struggles of finding acceptance as a gay person and the dissolution of friendships that occur after the revelation of one’s sexual orientation. She also writes a lot about love. Coming out as gay, bisexual, lesbian or transgender is a difficult process. One fraught with the disillusionment of friendships, tense familial dialogues and a deep confrontation with one’s self.

This process is even more conflagrated when one has few or no gay role models. Without such figures one’s experiences may seem less valid and more idiosyncratic. “Well, I didn’t know many gay people when I was growing up, and most of my role models were heterosexual—at least as far as I knew—until I got to college,” Wade said.

Having openly gay and lesbian professors helps students who are struggling with sexuality dispel negative stereotypes about LGBT people.

Beth Kraig was a role model for Wade while an undergraduate student at Pacific Lutheran University. “At eighteen, just meeting Beth Kraig was life-changing. The most important of the many things I learned from her was when she told me once during an advising session: ‘You know, some people act sympathetic when I tell them I’m a lesbian, like they feel sorry for me and that’s the only way they can tolerate who I am. It’s as if people think we can’t help it, but that if I did have a choice, of course we’d choose to be straight,’” Wade explained. “Beth made clear that she wouldn’t change her life as a lesbian, or her life-partner- ship with Suzanne, regardless of whether such a choice was possible.”

Wade grew up in a conservative enclave in West Seattle, Washington, which she describes as a place that wasn’t welcoming of homosexuality. “I knew from an early age that even if I looked like I fit in there, e.g. white skin and various markers of middle-classness, I contained a truth inside me—perhaps more than one—that wouldn’t be well-received in that world and certainly could never be openly acknowledged,” Wade said.

To tell her parents she was a lesbian was difficult.

In one of her poems, “When My Grandmother Learns I Am a Lesbian” that is included in her acclaimed collection of poems, “When I Was Straight,” she elucidates the plight of coming out to family members who are not receptive or immediately accepting. “Don’t be silly, dear. You’re Scandinavian,” was the response Wade’s grandmother gave her.

The coming out process is never simple; there are always instances where your sexuality needs to be clarified because people automatically assume an individual is straight until proven otherwise or unless it is visibly obvious. “I have to come out to someone almost every day, even if it’s just clarifying that my spouse isn’t a man when I’m filling out a form at the bank or the pharmacy,” Wade said.

The constant need for clarification and frequent invisibility of LGBT people is a result of cultural training, wherein the majority of couples on television and in films are heterosexuals, where homosexual relations are relegated to independent cinema and literature. Homosexual couples also deal with a lot of legal difficulties, especially since gay marriage has only recently become legal in certain states.

“We knew from our years of having to get new power of attorney paperwork and living wills drawn up in every new state we moved to (there have been five states total), and always worrying if the legal paperwork we had would be ‘enough’ in a medical emergency,” Wade said.

The legal system is a bureaucratic nightmare for gay couples to navigate, often hypocritical and insensitive. For instance, many gay couples cannot put their significant others as beneficiaries on their health insurance. “The coming-out FIV could not put Wade’s partner of eleven years on her health insurance plan, even after they were legally married in Washington state. Regarding this matter, Wade said, “Our legal marriage in Washington did not transfer to life in Florida, as we knew theoretically it wouldn’t, but I was still dismayed that my marriage license meant nothing to my employer, even after the state from FIU HR after I submitted the marriage license information in my business speak, that my marriage to Angie changed nothing. I was still single as long as Florida’s same-sex marriage ban remained in place, unable to cover her on my health insurance.”

Despite the copious amounts of red tape, Wade is still an incredibly optimistic and enthusiastic professor. She took her creative non-fiction class and was astonished by the amount of feedback and constructive criticism she gives her students.

She is one of the few if not the only professors that I have had that made themselves truly accessible to their students. Her passion and real for her work radiates every time she speaks. Wade views FIU as a “magical” place to teach, explaining, “In fact, no faculty person has ever refused to work with me except to retire! Now there has to be something magical, I thought, about that dream team of writers and that place where they teach,” said Wade.

I wanted to know what kind of advice Wade had for students and faculty members who are currently struggling with their sexual identity, and of course Wade shared some eloquent guidance.

“Being gay or bisexual or transgressed isn’t inherently good or bad any more than being heterosexual is inherently good or bad—used to fall into this apologetic mindset at the beginning of coming out. I used to think, ‘I need to be extra-supergood so people won’t be afraid of my lesions or judge me because of it,’” Wade said.

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Every Wednesday Madari Pendas and Chris Portilla will go where no column has gone before. Together they will take a deeper look into the LGBT community at FIU and produce a column that will consists of keen analysis within the daily lives of LGBT students and faculty. You may call it their research opinion or call it what they consider to name it: a Pride Guide. Make sure to read more and fiusm.com.
**RUN PANTHER, RUN**

Sophomore athlete sets new heptathlon record mid-season

**LOUIS AGUDELO**
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Tennis opens season on high note

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The FIU Panthers faced a daunting task coming into the first serve of the 2015 season. They prepared open their schedule for only four years, with FIU going down to LU in the first set against Liberty University.

The Lady Flames weren’t going without a fight, as Nicola Wellman brought the score back to even at 2-2 by defeating FIU sophomore Valentina Briceno (No. 6) 6-2, and 6-2.

Florida International reclaimed the lead with the defeat of Maria Khval 6-3, and 6-2 at the hands of sophomore Nina Nagode (No. 4). The Liberty, no surprise, came back as junior Kailltin Bronzovich (No. 5) dropped a close match to Evangeline Crist 6-3 and 7-5, tying the score at 3. Neema Caluk (No. 3) stepped back onto the court against Emily Groenveld with a shot at redemption from losing in her doubles match earlier in the day.

She secured the home-opener win for FIU with the 7-6(3) and 7-6(4) victory.

The Panthers look to keep a good thing going as they welcome the Stetson University Hatters on Friday, Jan. 30.

First serve is to come at noon on the home court of the undefeated FIU Panthers for the Hilton Garden Invitational for a meet this coming weekend on Jan. 30-31.

For anyone who doesn’t know, the heptathlon is a seven part event, involving the 60-meter dash, long jump, shot put, high jump, 60-meter hurdles, pole vault, and 1000-meter run.

“My favorite event in high school was the triple jump, shot put, high jump, and 1000-meter run,” Espitia said. “I do hop so I do like most of the events.”

The sophomore, who’s been in the states for less than a decade, and has participated in track and field for only four years, has set the bar for future Panther track and field multi-event athletes at a staggering 4,708 points.

Each event is scored at a scale with some events weighing more than others in the series of seven.

“This was a high standard to set, but the modest record setter says otherwise.

“I think most of us could’ve done it,” Espitia said.

The Panthers will travel back to Winston-Salem for the Birmingham Invitational, which will then be held at the same indoor facility in Birmingham for Feb. 25-26.
Rec center expansion plans are underway

REC CENTER, PAGE 1

Whoever is concerned about the gym being closed during the construction time frame shouldn’t be worried because the rec center will be 100 percent fully operating during the expansion.

The current Rec Center building was opened in 2005 and, at the time, was built for 27,000 students. That number has now doubled. Even with the opening in 2005 the construction of the building was only the beginning.

"When this building was first built it was planned as phase one," Frye said. "A few years ago we went back to the original architects for this building and asked them to put together a vision plan of how the building would expand. They produced some drawings for us which we used to try and capture what the actual building could look like."

The overall expansion of the Rec Center will be about 9,000 square feet of fitness space that includes free weights and cardio spaces.

Another addition to the Rec Center that absolutely will be welcomed with open arms is a new three court basketball gymnasium that will go along with the two courts that are already there.

With the new courts, more basketball games can be played involving more students and eliminating long waits to play in the next game.

Three group fitness areas will be added to the second floor of the new Rec Center. One will be a dedicated spinning room, the other will be a matted room for martial arts groups, and the third will be a small group fitness room.

The small group fitness room is a great way to get six to eight of your friends together and work as a team doing exercises led by a trainer.

Another exciting addition is there will be one racquet ball court and one convertible squash and racquetball court.

The FIU Recreation Center will soon begin updates and renovations to better help the students who use their facility.

The last noticeable change that will be made is the expansion of the men’s and women’s locker room.

All this construction will be taking place on the south side of the gym where the parking lot of the health center is today.

There is a lot to look forward in the expansion of the Rec Center which is continuing the trend the university is trying to show as a growing school and community.

Once this project is complete, it will capture the attention of students who normally don’t visit the Rec Center. This is because the way the new part of the gym will look is being planned by the same architects who designed the Parkview dorms.

Frye has all the confidence in the architects and builders for the expansion after seeing them build the Parkview dorms.

"Everyone likes how Parkview looks and it was a great quality team," Frye said. "We are expecting that same kind of quality on the expansion."

Robert Frye
Director
Recreation Services

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Everyone likes how Parkview looks and it was a great quality team. We are expecting that same kind of quality on the expansion.
University crowns Mr. and Miss FIU 2015

On the right, Miss FIU 2014 Andrea Mirobal puts on her crown as she prepares to host Mr. and Miss FIU on Saturday, Jan. 24. On the bottom left, the Mr. FIU contestants line up during the Mr. FIU pageant. On the top left, Mr. FIU contestant Joannier Pinales prepares for the pageant backstage.

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While the world had their eyes fixed on the U.S. Century Bank Arena for the Miss Universe Pageant, the University hosted its own students for the Miss and Mr. FIU Scholarship Pageant.

On Saturday, the day before the Miss Universe pageant, eight women and eight men showcased their talents and finese at the Biscayne Bay Campus’ Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre. Teyra Whittaker, a sophomore broadcast media major, won Miss FIU; and Michael Cabral, a senior majoring in management information systems, was crowned Mr. FIU.

Whittaker received a $1500 scholarship and Cabral received a $500 scholarship. Miss FIU is part of the Miss Americas organization and will go on to participate in future events and competitions. Louis Macias, the assistant director for the Multicultural Programs and Services and executive director for Mr. and Miss FIU says this is the first year the Mr. FIU winner received a scholarship.

“We want to try and grow as an organization,” said Macias, the first time executive director. “We’re hoping that it gains popularity.”

The Miss Universe Pageant attracted negative attention—from the community, students and faculty—for spending University money for what many are calling crass use of funds. Macias says the Mr. and Miss FIU competition is, however, an empowering experience based on the “well-roundedness” of students contestents.

“Physical beauty is heavily weighted with the Miss USA [pageant],” Macias said. He adds that the talent and interview portion hold more weight than lifestyle and fitness. “That says something about what’s valued.”

The contestants agree.

Yeferson Acosta, a senior majoring in psychology, says he entered the competition to connect and build with new people. Acosta, who is involved with Baptist Collegiate Ministry on campus, says he wants to encourage students to be more proactive during their college years.

“It’s a bit intimidating for students to get involved,” Acosta said. Acosta was one of the founding members of BCM at FIU, and helped the organization grow to 115 members. He says personal engagement can help break the ice for shy or unengaged students. “Personal invitations is much better than social media. [Social Media] is important too, but personal invitations will always get students to join organizations and becoming active on campus.”

Macias said each contestant, like Acosta, had character and aspirations, but in choosing a winner, they looked for the most “dynamic” individual who could “think on their feet.”

In March, the University will host their annual Torch Awards where Miss FIU will be greeting donors and working directly with the University president Mark B. Rosenberg. In June, Miss FIU will go on to represent the University in Miss Florida.

“We needed someone who is ready for all that,” Macias said.

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Swimming and diving claims first ever win against FGCU

David Drucker

The women’s swimming and diving team defeated Florida Gulf Coast University 167-133 in the ladies’ last home meet of the season.

The seniors, who were honored before the game, were represented well by Johanna Gustafsdottir as she claimed first place in three different events throughout the day.

The competition was tight throughout the meet.

The Eagles, who were once ranked 28th best in the nation this season, often went back and forth with the Panthers for first place.

Gustafsdottir finished ahead of the pack in the 200 freestyle, the 200 breaststroke, and the 200 individual medley. Junior Valerie Ingels also touched the wall first in the 200 butterfly in 2:03.28. The freshmen also swam well in their seniors’ last regular season competition at Biscayne Bay.

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Freshman Kyna Pereira earned two first place finishes, once in the 1000 freestyle with a pool record of 10:09.80, and again in the 500 freestyle with 5:01.42.

Freshman Silvia Scalia also bested the other swimmers once in the 200 backstroke with a mark of 2:00.75. The Panthers’ last event of the meet, the 400 freestyle relay, highlighted a successful outing for the Panthers; they set a pool record of 3:29.05.

Florida Atlantic University will host the Panthers next on Friday, Jan. 30 in Boca Raton.

The women will have one more meet the next day at the University of Miami before the Conference USA Championships begin on Wednesday Feb. 18.

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