Lecture engages students to better understand Islam

BELMARIE PONCIANO
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Amy Tenorio understands why many individuals may have biased notions of Islam.

A sophomore majoring in creative writing, Tenorio cites the negative media coverage of the religion as contributing to the negative opinions that people harbor.

However, Dr. Reza Aslan, a writer and religious studies scholar, will be coming to the University to deliver a lecture about Islam in the 21st Century to provide a new perspective of the religion.

Aslan is a professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside, to become a mentoring influence on the members of the creative writing program, in accordance with the following:

Williams lectures at the university

TOM WILLIAMS
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The University’s creative writing program, in accordance with the Department of English, is bringing a published writer to speak at FIU.

Tom Williams, author and director of the creative writing program at Morehead State University in Kentucky, will host a reading from his latest novel, “Don’t Start Me Talkin’.”

At the lecture, Williams hopes to engage the crowd.

“From this talk, I really want people to know that here’s somebody who’s engaging with some important issues that only fiction can really address well,” Williams said. “That here’s somebody whom, as Holden Caulfield once said, ‘you wish was a terrific friend of yours and you could call him up on the phone whenever you felt like it.’”

Each year, on a rotating basis, the members of the creative writing faculty invite a visiting writer of their choice for the University’s Writers on the Bay reading series. This year, John Dufresne, professor of creative writing and author of five novels, invited Williams.

“Typically, when we bring writers to campus who are also active teachers of creative writing, we find that we have thoughtful readings and especially engaging question-and-answer sessions following the reading. Last year’s reading was superb!”

Alec Thomas, a junior in English, studies outside SIPA. The cooler temperature brought a lot of students to better understand Islam.

Don’t Start Me Talkin’ author Tom Williams lectures at the university

NICOLE MONTERO
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Corrections

In Volume 26, Issue 55 Alpha Phi Sigma was incorrectly labeled as Sigma Phi Alpha on Page 1 with the BBQ photo. The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BCB at 305-919-4722.
Phones might turn obsolete with new invention

MICHELLE MARCHANTE
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Who needs a phone?

That seems like an odd type of question to ask. While it’s true that technically, no one really needs a phone, it’s a product that is held dear by many, myself included. Cell phones are no longer just a useful technological device, but rather, an additional part of our body. You can’t anywhere without seeing someone on their cellphone, whether they’re talking, texting, using Twitter or playing the hottest game.

Everywhere you look on campus, people are looking down at their phone’s screen. Who wouldn’t have thought that a small portable device would become so important to us? Well, the days of carrying a cell phone may possibly become non-existent in the near future. Why would I say that? The cellphone may be close to becoming obsolete, with a new technological invention, the Cirect bracelet, courtesy of Cirect, a French startup company. Cirect plans to revolutionize the world with their bracelet that transforms your arm into a smartphone, with all the capabilities of one. Cirect’s bracelet idea is simple. You snap on the bracelet and with a shake of your wrist, barn, a holographic image of a touch screen appears on your arm. According to the company the bracelet’s concept video, Cirect still hadn’t created a prototype, using computer-generated imagery instead to show what its product could do. This led many people to believe it was a farce since the company is asking for public donations to make its product a possibility. Recently though, Cirect’s co-founder Guillaume Pommier claimed in an interview with Gizmag that they now have a working prototype and are in the process of "upgrading it.” If Cirect’s product proves to be the real deal and not a farce like many suspect, it certainly will be a large step in the technological world, but would it really be an advancement for us? The line between our humanity and technology is thinning; where do we stop and the machine begins? While it does seem like an amazing idea, not having the weight or size of a cellphone, but instead a simple, lightweight bracelet, the concept might potentially be harmful. It’s already known that being on your phone 24/7 is harmful to our bodies, and that too much texting could lead to repetitive strain injury otherwise known as “Blackberry thumb.”

The line between our humanity and technology is thinning; where do we stop and the machine begins?

If injuries like this can occur by using a solid platform, what type of injuries would be sustained from typing away on our own arm? Could it cause more joint and muscle pains? Could the sensors inherently damage our nervous system much like a laser would? Would our skin get irritated? Risk or not, the idea of the bracelet is compelling. If Cirect actually gets enough donations to fund the making of this bracelet, Pommier expects to have it out in the public market within a year and half, with a possible retail value of $400. In a year or two from now, when you’re walking through campus, instead of seeing people glued to their phone, will we now be seeing people glued to their arm?

STOP CURLING

VERSENA PERRONE/THE BEACON

We have to celebrate each other’s accomplishments and encourage our power to pursue our own virtues

Encourage our good decisions, for we over analyzed each move just like you did.

Compliment our outfit, because we may have scored a huge sale or worked really hard to purchase it at Urban Outfitters.

Congratulations when we’re eating a salad or working out, because you know how much it sucks and you should be proud that we’re actually sticking through it.

If we go a different route and eat the pound burger, well then don’t tell us how much it will add to our thighs; pass the ketchup and laugh while you steal a fry.

There are so many young women fighting difficulties such as illnesses, relatives dying or a battle with themselves. Constantly telling themselves that everything will be alright. Every problem has a solution tomorrow, when the sun rises, better things will come.

These women, like us, don’t need the added weight of unreasonable hate or intolerance.

Maybe she cut you in line, maybe she did dress up too much for school, she was way too loud in class or her views on reality are a little off. But who really cares?

Who cares how many filters she used on her picture? That’s what’s they’re there for Who cares if you think she looks slutty because her boobs are big and too exposed in her dress? She’s blessed and knows it, I wish I was. Who cares if she only posts sororities? She’s found a place where she belongs, and heck, she’s paying a ton of money for all these moments and might as well juice them.

Veronica Quispe
Contributing Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

Go out and give a girl a compliment, I dare you.

Go on and tell her that her shirt looks awesome on her. Not as charity, not as an act of kindness, but more as an act of support.

In a time when women are constantly being fought to be respected and valued in society, we must not forget that it applies to both genders.

We have to celebrate each other’s accomplishments and encourage our power to pursue our own virtues.

It is very important that women appreciate and respect each other. We are all one team, we are one group of people who more or less share the same problems. Most of the time it is our love lives or trying to be successful in our careers or, of course, TOM.

Regardless of the battle we are fighting on this day, we all want warriors fighting through it.

Between concert tickets not being cheaper, food making you gain weight, the Miami Heat losing, him not texting you back fast enough, and GIPS, a girl barely has time to remind herself that these things are only temporary.

There are world issues, and that list is even more painful.

Now, it doesn’t stop there. We must also live among women who are curious or out to judge.

Why are we each other’s problem? It’s 2015, it’s time to stop being catty.

Give her a compliment, she deserves it

Michele Marchante
Contributing Writer
opinion@fiusm.com

Monday, February 2, 2015

Phones might turn obsolete with new invention

STOP CURLING

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop off your letters at either GC 210 or WOC 214.

With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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Frost Art Museum’s MLK exhibit opens for its fifth year

LESLEY ANGELA BLANCO
Staff Writer
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In a collaborative effort to raise awareness and maintain the memory of the civil rights movement and its most revered political leader, Martin Luther King Jr., Multicultural Programs and Services has partnered with the Frost Art Museum to create the MLK @ FIU exhibit. This is its fifth year running, and although MLK week is coming to a close, Black history month is right around the corner and the message it makes to continue the study of the student body’s psyche at the University is just as relevant and powerful.

Dr. Kalik Mathee, of the FIU department of Human and Molecular Genetics, is the main organizer and creator of the event at the Frost Art Museum. The MLK exhibit at the Frost Art Museum showcases portraits and drawings dedicated to the movement. The exhibit opened on Jan. 6 and ended on Jan 29.

“The idea was basically that the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration should not just be one day where we have this big breakfast and then everyone forgets what happened. To keep it a little bit more in the hearts and minds of people, we wanted to do activities that span the month of January,” Mathee said. “The whole idea is that we have students at FIU who are first generation, whose parents aren’t originally from the U.S, so they don’t really know the history of Americans – especially civil rights history. Due to the civil rights movement and the struggle of African Americans at that time, it has also caused a domino effect which paved the way for minorities in regards to opportunity and equality. Mathee said that if it wasn’t for the civil rights movement, we would be a minority ourselves, wouldn’t have been able to become a faculty member or get a decent job at the University.

The University, consisting mostly of Hispanic minorities, wouldn’t be what it is today had it not been for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Each year the MLK exhibit at the Frost tries to adhere to a specific theme, the theme this year is “His Vision: Our Responsibility,” which shows a series of illustrations made by author Henry Cole. In regards to the advertising, Telia said that she stumbled upon the exhibit at the museum by chance, and there wasn’t enough marketing for the events going on during MLK week. Victor Garbulosa, third year student for physical therapy said, “This is the first time I’ve heard about the MLK exhibit this year, but I haven’t really seen any flyers, nothing in the email, nothing really raising awareness for it.

That small group needs to raise awareness and make sure MLK month is a big deal. I think since FIU is an international university I think it’s important that we highlight issues such as MLK, and the struggles of the civil rights movement.”

Last episodes enough to give a ‘nerdgasm’

DC TV

If there was any doubt in anyone’s minds that Dr. Wells couldn’t be the Reverse Flash, all of that just got turned upside down. During this week’s episode, we witnessed Dr. Wells using his speed powers to run away from an attack by newcomer villain the Pied Piper. It made me jump out of my couch in shock. I really did believe that Dr. Wells was just in possession of the Reverse Flash suit, but I was proven wrong.

I enjoyed this episode for a multitude of reasons: the first reason was Barry’s message at the very beginning of the episode about how we need to remind ourselves that we always have a hero that we all look up to. Second, the character of Hartley Rathaway was very captivating. He was a convincing villain with clear motives, and to maintain the memory of the civil rights movement and its most revered political leader, Martin Luther King Jr., Multicultural Programs and Services has partnered with the Frost Art Museum to create the MLK @ FIU exhibit. This is its fifth year running, and although MLK week is coming to a close, Black history month is right around the corner and the message it makes to continue the study of the student body’s psyche at the University is just as relevant and powerful.

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Leslie Angela Blanco
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As for this week’s episode of Arrow, the new crime mob boss known as Brickwell has been making his name known throughout Starling City with his vicious attacks. Side note, I love this trend that the CW is partaking in by making their villains very believable and threatening. I know I’ve already said it earlier in this piece, but it just makes me so happy as a fan of both shows.

The final reason gave me the biggest nerdgasm of the year, thus far. Yes, I know 2015 just started. At the very end of the episode, Dr. Wells is shown with a device he calls the “tachyon” on his chest that is giving him some sort of energy that his pal named Gideon is warning him not to use. This device is giving him the powers of the “Speed Force.” For those of you that may not know, the Speed Force is this power that essentially powers all of the versions of The Flash’s superhuman abilities. And it seems like the creators of the show are doing it right by time travel.

But like I said last week, I’m not entirely convinced that Dr. Wells is up to no good. There is so much more to the eye, and I’m willing to be as patient as they need me to be to witness greatness in the world of The Flash! However, with that being said it does lead me to feel excited to see the uprising of Laurel’s fighting skills. It’s mentioned throughout the whole episode that she doesn’t have the skills that the rest of the gang has; all she has is a law degree and she is not the fighter her sister Sara was. This not only motivates Laurel to keep on fighting crime to become the hero her sister once was, but it gives her more incentive to watch her character development. It’s always great to see the underdog come out on top, and I believe we’ll be seeing that very soon from Laurel.

Now that we all know that Oliver Queen is indeed alive, it’s time for him to return to Starling City and fast. Things are getting out of hand due to the terror brought upon by Brick and we need our Arrow to be the one to fix it all.

“DC on TV” with Chris Santiago will review the ongoing series Flash and Arrow.

life@fiusm.com
Skilled lyricism, metaphors abound in ‘Tetsuo & Youth’

This past week, my friend texted me to sing the praises of Lupe Fiasco’s newest album, “Tetsuo & Youth.” According to him, “Tetsuo & Youth” was so impressive lyrically that he declared, “It’s like Chino XL decided to make an album with Ras Kass, with KRS-One supervising and Canibus giving input on big words that should be added to verses.”

This drew quite the hearty laugh from me, not just because it was a well-crafted simile, but because he was including Lupe Fiasco in the same company as some of hip-hop’s lyrical scions.

The same Lupe Fiasco who has an irritating tendency to pause for various seconds in the middle of a verse. The same Lupe Fiasco who was at the forefront of the 2007-08 fresh kid fad that introduced purple jackets and skinny jeans into the genre.

Personal feelings about Lupe aside, my friend’s persistence persuaded me to give his newest release a fair listen.

It was certainly worth it. Of the twelve tracks (not counting the four interludes), only one scares you away by the one-minute mark and a further two are (in this author’s estimation) below par.

An album with a three-to-one ratio of good tracks to bad is pretty good work, and if you are one of the many whom aren’t as put off by the pauses and the slowed down flow, you will enjoy his rhyming that much more.

The topics explored on the tracks are yet another positive this album has working in its favor. They are interesting, thought provoking, and current.

Topics include the high incarceration rate in this country, analyzing the situation with his record label in a bold way, getting out of relationships before they turn sour and other interesting social commentary.

A fantastic display of social commentary came on “Little Death,” where he rhymes “Sam marrying Sam…if that sickens you, you a bigot/If it doesn’t, well you’re wicked,” a nice observation of the no-win situation it is to declare your position on homosexual marriage in today’s social climate.

The best tracks on “Tetsuo & Youth” were “Mural,” “Dots & Lines,” “Prisoner 1 & 2,” “Body of Work,” “Little Death,” “Adoration of the Magi,” and “They. Resurrect Over.New.”

It’s a very good album, but I disagree with my friend’s assertion that this album brings to mind Ras Kass or Chino XL. There exists a better comparison.

The only other rapper who is better at painting vivid pictures in his rhymes is Sage Francis, though he goes about in a much different style than Lupe.

Angelo Lopez is a DJ who hosts the hip-hop show “Black Helicopters” on WRGP 95.3 FM. You can listen to Black Helicopters on WRGP every Monday from 6pm to 8pm. “Helicopter Pad” is the accompanying column on the latest hip-hop news and releases.

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The Beacon – 6
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Monday, February 2, 2015

FOOTBALL

Calling all Panthers: Football to hold open tryouts

On Feb. 18, the University’s football team will be holding open tryouts for the 2015-2016 season. While the idea of walking on and excelling at that level seems like a longshot, it’s not unheard of. There are several current and former NFL stars who were college walk-ons.

South Florida natives might remember the name Santana Moss. Moss was a speedster out of Miami Carol City High School who went to the University of Miami on a track scholarship. Moss took his speed to the football field and went on to become one of the top receivers in the University’s history. Moss was drafted No. 16 overall in the 2001 draft and he just completed season No. 14 in the NFL.

Fans should become used to remembering the name Santana Moss. Moss was a star who was college walk-on. Expect big things from this exciting and talented roster this upcoming season.

EXPECT BIG THINGS FROM THIS EXCITING AND TALENTED ROSTER THIS UPCOMING SEASON.

PORTS

As recently drafted FIU players Aramis Garcia and Mike Franco continue their path towards the Major Leagues, new players must step up to lead this team to a successful season.

Fans should become used to seeing senior Josh Anderson and sophomore Chris Moraute stepping onto the diamond.

Having been named to the 2015 Preseason All Conference USA Team, the naming is an incredible feat having been recognized by the whole conference and it’s 12 head coaches that selected them. FIU baseball has been receiving a lot of positive attention as they are predicted to finish second this year.

Last season, Anderson started 56 games at third base for FIU and impacted the team on the offensive side as he finished second with a .300 batting average and 66 hits. He is projected to either be the third or fourth hitter on the team to be that big bat in the lineup to help the team score runs. He attempts to lead the team in runs batted in again as last season he was also the primary run producer on the team.

Anderson drove in 43 runs largely due to having 13 doubles and five home runs. He has been one of the main contributors to this FIU squad since his sophomore year.

Although his batting average was down compared to his last season average, his power numbers were even better as he belted seven home runs with a .42 RBI and 22 doubles - a team-best.

Last season Moraute had a stellar freshman campaign as he was named a Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American. Leading CUSA with nine wins and three losses, he was ranked third among conference pitchers in victories.

He also recorded a 1.95 earned run average that was eighth best in CUSA.

Two out of his nine wins were complete-game shutouts which led all rookies as well. Moraute had pinpoint control as the right hander only allowed 11 walks in 78.1 innings pitched.

Moraute has all the tools to lead this deep pitching staff to the top of the conference and hopefully become the ace that Mike Franco was last season.

Expect big things from this exciting and talented roster this upcoming season.
Panthers defeat Stetson University, improve record to 2-0

It was a battle of unbeaten women’s tennis teams Friday afternoon as FIU took on the Stetson University Hatters in Miami. Both teams came into the match looking to improve upon their 1-0 records after winning to open the season, but it was FIU who took a 4-3 victory, bringing their early season mark to 2-0 for the first time since 2010.

Stetson got off to a quick start, winning two out of the three doubles matches and taking an early 1-0 lead over the Panthers. Yana Koroleva and Kaitlin Brozovich were the only doubles team to win for FIU today with a 6-1 win in the No. 3 position.

Sophomore Nina Nagode, fought back from a near defeat against Stetson University’s Carolina Meregalli before winning the match 4-6, 7-6, 6-3.

Ashley Dean of Stetson made it very interesting and brought the match to a 3-3 tie after coming from behind to defeat Valentina Briceno in the No. 6 position.

On the court directly next to Dean and Briceno, FIU’s Nina Nagode and Stetson’s Carolina Meregalli went back and forth in a match that ended up deciding today’s contest. After dropping the first set 4-6, Nagode fought back from a near defeat in the second set, winning 7-6 in a tiebreaker.

Nagode won the final set, making the final score 4-6, 7-6, 6-3.

“I’m really happy that I was the one who decided the match,” Nagode said, “but I still think that we have to improve, especially in our doubles matches.”

Coach Katarina Petrovic agrees that the team needs to improve in doubles, considering they have lost the doubles point in each of their first two contests.

“We are still experimenting to see what we can do to get the doubles points,” Petrovic said. “I will continue to change [the doubles partners] all the time, and we will try to get that point.”

Petrovic realizes her team is better suited for singles due to their conditioning and positions. She also placed a lot of importance on practicing and getting better every day.

The Panthers will begin a 5-match Northeast road trip on Feb. 6, as they travel to Philadelphia to take on the University of Pennsylvania Quakers. FIU will return to Miami for their next home match on Feb. 28 against the Florida Gulf Coast University Eagles.

A Miami Marlins perspective from a casual baseball fan

I’ll admit it. I have never been a big baseball fan, much less a good one. As a kid, I only used to pay attention to the ball game when it was time for the first hit or strikeout to occur in a pitch-less event. For me, America’s past time just never stuck.

Like any South Florida baseball fan, however, I have been raggeting on Jeffrey Loria for years. I know enough to know that the former Expos owner had been shipping away the Marlins’ premium talent for unproven youngsters since forever.

With each fire sale, the pattern became more evident; a top-notch player in Major League Baseball would be shipped off overnight to some fortunate team and the Marlins would receive prospects in return.

These young players would pan out, though only to be sold off again like cattle for calves. It’s a great market principle and a terrible way to run a baseball team.

And so, I could have sworn Stanton was to meet the same fate. The six-foot-six slugger with 154 career home runs, is the biggest fish the Marlins have had in a while.

Given Loria’s reputation, I lumped down waiting for the worst, like so many Marlins fans.

Then, out of nowhere, Loria lowered the boom with the largest contract in baseball history. Stanton’s $325 million, 13-year contract that was complete with a no-trade clause, still feels unreal to me. Although the contract was signed more than two months ago, I have a hard time accepting that Loria finally locked one up.

For the first time, the Marlins will not just temporarily have a superstar, they will have the chance to build a team around one.

I think that I will have no choice but to accept reality when the University’s own baseball team plays the Marlins in Jupiter for spring training.

When considering that the Panthers are projected to finish second in Conference USA by multiple polls this season, it might finally be safe to say that 2015 will be a good year to be or become a South Florida baseball fan.

Whiteside revives professional career

Hassan Whiteside? Before the 2014-2015 NBA season, this was not a household name to many people. The Miami Heat gave him an opportunity to get his name out into the league and nation.

So, who is Hassan Whiteside?

Whiteside was born on June 13, 1989 in Gastonia, N.C. There, he attended three high schools including Huss, Ashbrook, and Forestview High School. Even more difficult than attending three high schools in two years, was living with a single mother and six siblings.

For a short period of time, Whiteside moved to New Jersey to live with his father and play for East Side High School. He averaged 18 points, 10 rebounds, and 5.5 blocks per game in his time at East Side.

His brightest spot while playing high school basketball was when he returned home and attended The Patterson School in Lenor, N.C. In the 2008-2009 season, he led this team to a No. 1 national ranking and a 34-2 record.

Whiteside, the No. 19 center in his class, decided to sign with Marshall University. He turned down an offer from the University of Kentucky, a college basketball powerhouse.

Whiteside ended the 2009-2010 season with 182 blocks, which was No. 1 in the nation.

He broke the Freshman record for blocks in a single season held by Shawn Bradley from BYU.

After just one collegiate season, Whiteside declared for the 2015 NBA draft on March 29, 2010. He was drafted 3rd in the 2nd round of the 2010 NBA draft by the Sacramento Kings.

Throughout his career for the Kings, Whiteside dealt with being taken in and out of the roster. He was appointed to the King’s Developmental League team several times before finally being waived in 2012.

It took some time for Whiteside to be comfortable with the rotation but finally, he made himself known. On Jan. 4, 2015 he recorded 11 points, 10 rebounds, and five blocks against the Brooklyn Nets in which the Heat would win 88-84.

Whiteside proved the game against the Nets was not a fluke. Two games later, in a game against the Los Angeles Clippers, he scored 23 points and grabbed 16 rebounds. The Clippers’ front court, Deandre Jordan and Blake Griffin, had no answer for Whiteside and his dominance.

Whiteside’s paint awareness and athletic offensive capabilities will allow the Heat to work with a true center, something they’ve been lacking for several years.

For the full story go to fiusm.com.
DRESS TO IMPRESS

Freshman finance major Anne Darcius has a practice interview with Allen Levi, a Certified Public Accountant with Stroemer and Company, LLC in Aventura at the third annual Career in Gear event. The event included practice interviews, career advising, and food.

Barreto still helping Florida’s fish, wildlife

STEVIE WATERS
Sun Sentinel
TNS

Rodney Barreto was the most effective chairman the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission ever had.

Now, as chairman of the Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida, he’s again working tirelessly to improve and enhance the state’s outdoor opportunities.

Under Barreto’s strong leadership, the FWC protected valuable species such as bonefish and tarpon, derailed efforts to undermine the gill-net ban and expanded hunting on stormwater treatment areas.

The Miami businessman’s no-nonsense, take-charge approach was best illustrated five years ago when an extended cold spell killed thousands of snook. Instead of having workshops and surveys to figure out what to do, Barreto had the FWC immediately close the snook season statewide.

That move saved the state’s remaining snook population, which is now thriving.

Barreto spent 10 years as an FWC commissioner, seven of them as chairman. In recognition of his service, the agency created the Chairman Rodney Barreto FWC Employee of the Year Award.

But Barreto, who is also chairman of the South Florida Super Bowl Committee, couldn’t stay away for long.

He got involved with the Fish & Wildlife Foundation, became chairman in September and quickly set, and achieved, impressive goals.

Barreto said the non-profit Foundation, which was created by the state of Florida, is the fund-raising arm for the FWC.

It gets money from specialty license plates, like the bear and deer tags, “and we make sure it’s going to the right place,” Barreto said.

The Foundation also raised over $800,000, an unprecedented amount, at its third annual BlueGreen Event at FWC commission oner Ron Bergeron’s Green Glades Ranch in Weston in November.

Florida Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam, who supports land and water stewardship and sound agricultural practices that benefit fish and wildlife, was honored there with the 2014 BlueGreen Award for Conservation Leadership.

Some of that money will be used to upgrade the 55-year-old Everglades Youth Conservation Camp at the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area in northwestern Palm Beach County.

The camp has introduced countless youngsters to the outdoors and also hosted Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshops for women 18 and over who want to learn about fishing, camping, hunting, archery, shooting and other outdoors pursuits.

“All the current cabins will be leveled, we’ll build a new education center, we’ll build a new museum because of the history out there and put a new roof over the cafe-teria,” Barreto said.

“We’re also building a shooting range next door. It’ll be the only outdoor public range in Palm Beach County.”

Barreto said $3.2 million for building the range, which will include rifle and clay target shooting, will be from federal excise taxes on firearms and ammunition.

The balance of $2.2 million will come from the Foundation. Once the range’s design contract is approved, construction will take 18 months.

“West Palm Beach has the highest concentration of licensed hunters without a nearby range,” said Barreto, who hopes the range also will attract visiting shooters for competitions and serve as the winter home of the U.S. Shooting Team.

Barreto said that once the camp and range are “up and running,” he plans to use them as sales tools to encourage business partners such as Bass Pro Shops to help construct similar facilities throughout Florida.

Class of 2011 Alumna Natalie Fernandez started her foundation after meeting children without the means to play sports in Colombia.

She said it’s a way for athletes to not only promote themselves, but also support future generation athletes.

At the Sluggers Batting Cages in Tamiami Park and Hitters Hangout in Kendall, she leaves boxes where donors can leave bats, baseballs, softballs and baseball uniforms.

She has also found support through the Miami Marlins Baseball Team.

Fernandez said collecting equipment has been the easier part, the challenge is having enough funds to bring them to Colombia.

“It’s hard, it’s a lot of work, but I put my career on hold. If I get a job in T.V., it’s going to be 100 percent T.V. So if I’m starting this, I can’t leave it half-way,” Fernandez said.

“I found the purpose of my life, so that’s why I’m pushing and pushing forward.”

Being involved at the University as a Phi Sigma Sigma sorority sister, volunteering with FIU Alternative Breaks to help less fortunate in Washington D.C. and participating in FIU Dance Marathon really showed her passion to help others.

“I think that also influenced me in giving back… It was always in me to help,” she said.

Even though soccer is the most commonly played sport in Colombia, Fernandez sides first with baseball and softball because she thinks these sports have a lot of potential to grow in the community.

According to the National Consulting Center of Colombia, 77 percent of 2,475 Colombians who were surveyed last year said that sports like soccer bring them closer together.

This is why Fernandez loves sports, because it is brings people together in celebration.

“I think it unites people and it’s a way of people forgetting like the bad things that are happening,” Fernandez said.

Later on, Fernandez hopes to teach the kids English and talk to them about the importance of taking care of their body to be healthier and better athletes along the way.

“The Foundation presented itself in the most random way, but through my career, which is my passion, I learned my meaning of life,” she said. “I feel like as a reporter, we’re a voice of many people.”

Alumna helps less fortunate in Colombia

CAMILA FERNANDEZ
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When Fernandez returned home to Miami, she said she couldn’t forget her experience and decided to put her career on hold to help support the kids.

“So seeing them -- they barely have anything, and us that have everything, and if all I can do is be the messenger, then by all means why not fight for that?” said the journalism major.

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