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 combined science, 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, believes that the members of the audience will have the opportunity to have a direct encounter with him.

At the lecture, students will have the opportunity to engage in conversation with Aslan, an expert writer and religious studies scholar.

Botta believes that Aslan will not simply lecture aimlessly, but that he will offer various ideas to give people an idea of the topic of Islam.

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

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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 newest book, “Among the Wild Mulattos,” which will be released this summer.

John DeFrense, 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.

“Read everything. Write a bunch of bad stuff. Find people who are encouraging. Write better bad stuff,” said: “Then, seek out people who can help you with the practical matters, like how to submit and who to contact, and write even better bad stuff.”

The event will be held on Thursday, Feb. 5. It will start at 8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

“Always, these events encourage students, faculty, staff, and members of the general public to have a direct encounter with contemporary literature and one of its creators,” said Wade. “We want everyone possible to encounter living writers of both poetry and prose via the Writing on the Bay reading series. Take advantage.”

A lecture from this expert can really help people dismiss misconceptions.

Amy Tenorio
Sophomore
Computer Science major

WINTER IN MIAMI

Aída Cardenas, junior in English, studies outside SIPA. The cooler temperature brought a lot of students outside during the most recent cold front.

Aida Cardenas, junior in English, studies outside SIPA. The cooler temperature brought a lot of students outside during the most recent cold front.
Mexico hospital blast leaves at least two dead, dozens hurt

TRACY WILKINSON AND CECILIA SÁNCHEZ
Los Angeles Times

An explosion early Thursday destroyed most of a maternity and children's hospital in Mexico City, killing at least two people and trapping and injuring dozens. More than 60 children and adults were injured, mostly by flying glass and the flames, according to firefighters. Red Cross personnel, police and other workers who flooded the scene. The dead were identified only as a woman and a minor. Officials earlier gave a larger death toll, but it was revised downward, although 22 of the injured were in critical condition and other people may still be trapped, Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said.

The explosion caused by unknown sobs, Maria Angeles Bautista was among scores of people who crowded the scene frantically seeking information on relatives among the patients or hospital employees.

“My niece gave birth on Monday but the baby had a low weight, so they were monitoring her,” Bautista said. “We don’t know anything about the two. We’ve gone to all the hospitals, but there is no information. We are desperate.”

There were conflicting reports of what had caused the explosion, but the investment was focusing on a possible leak of gas that was being pumped by a hose from a delivery truck to the hospital’s kitchens. The blast was concentrated around the kitchen and the emergency-area arrival kitchen. The blast was concentrated around the kitchen and the emergency-area arrival kitchen. The blast was concentrated around the kitchen and the emergency-area arrival kitchen.

The explosion happened about 7 a.m., before visiting hours and a shift change to the hospital’s daytime schedule. That, combined with the hospital being relatively small, probably averted a higher casualty toll.

There were conflicting reports of what had caused the explosion, but the investigation was focusing on a possible leak of gas that was being pumped by a hose from a delivery truck to the hospital’s kitchens. The blast was concentrated around the kitchen and the emergency-area arrival kitchen. Nearby neighbors reported a strong smell of gas before the blast.

Nearly 70 percent of the government-run, two-story hospital, which caters primarily to middle- and lower-income patients, closed or was heavily damaged, Mancera said.

Milenio Television reported that a pregnant woman who was removed from the ruins gave birth in the ambulance taking her to another facility.

The hospital is located in the Cuauhtemoc district, the western edge of the sprawling capital. Mancera, the mayor, said three people with the gas company supplying the hospital were detained for questioning about possible negligence.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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.

Correction

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Give her a compliment, she deserves it

VERONICA QUIRME
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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 fighting to be respected and valued in society, we must not forget that it applies to both sexes.

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 nothing but victory for the working women.

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

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

Now, it doesn’t stop here. 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.

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

Encourage good decisions, for we ever 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.

Congratulate us 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, sooner or later, 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 didn’t 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 there for. Who cares if you think she looks silly 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 those moments and might as well juice them.

Every woman is different, and hating on them or putting them down for any of the little irrelevant things I mentioned before makes no sense. Why are we in a war with our own kind?

Maybe we should’ve paid more attention to Ms. Norbury in Mean Girls. Men already make our lives a nightmare by belittling us with their apathy and judging. We should stand together to appreciate and support one another.

I’m not asking for us to all get along and “bake a cake filled with rainbows and smiles and hope to be happy.” What I’m asking for is tolerance.

Tolerance for the chick who is always pised off, the sorority girl, the girl that hasn’t found herself yet, the one who posts a selfie an hour, the slutty one, the prude, the jock, the PLUR warrior and even that girl that bullied you in high school.

I haven’t mastered this art yet. I’d be lying if I told you it’s easy to not hate the girl that believes in everything you’re against. But that’s the beauty of life. People will disagree, that’s what makes it interesting.

Support is something every woman needs and deserves. Heck, we pay ridiculous amounts of money for it at Victoria’s Secret, why not get it for free?

Phones might turn obsolete with new invention

MICHELLE MARCHANT
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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 go 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 would’ve thought that a small portable device would become so important to us? Well, the days of carrying a cell phone may possibly become nonexistent in the near future. Why would I say that? The cellphone may be close to becoming obsolete, with a new technological invention, the Ciceret bracelet, courtesy of Ciceret, a french startup company. Ciceret plans to revolutionize the world with their bracelet that transforms your arm into a smartphone, with all the capabilities of one. Ciceret’s bracelet idea is simple. You snap on the bracelet and with a shake of your wrist, bam, a holographic image of a touch screen appears on your arm. According to the company, the concept video the bracelet will be a waterproof device that comes in two sizes—16GB and 32GB—and 10 different colors, comprised of a digital projector that uses eight long range proximity sensors, with connectivity options such as Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and a Micro USB.

While this idea sounds wonderful and quite frankly, impossible, if this invention were to truly succeed what would it mean for future cellphone users? Being able to send and receive messages, play games, check your mail and answer your phone on your arm seems a bit out there and more like it belongs in a movie.

At the time of the bracelet’s concept video, Ciceret 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, Ciceret’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 Ciceret’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 the 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.”

STOP CURLING

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays

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 Ciceret 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 you now be seeing people glued to their arm?
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 of the student body’s psyche at the University is just as relevant and powerful.

Dr. Kali 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 everybody forgets what happens. 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, she being a minority herself, 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’

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 Harley Rathaway was very captivating. He was a convincing villain with clear motives, which made his character much more enjoyable to watch. These days it’s hard to believe that a villain can be threatening. But to watch Rathaway find a way to almost kill Barry and go through with it made the episode that much more exciting and scary.

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 creatures of the show are going on the route where Reverse Flash taps into this great power to access the ability to 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 than meets 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!

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.

Just the ruthlessness that Brick brings to the show really keeps me on my toes. He kills his victims in cold blood with no shame, especially during that scene where he killed one of the Aldermen in front of Arsenal and Black Canary.

And since we’re now on topic of Black Canary, I feel as if there needs to be a few words said about Laurel. I’ve never been a fan of Black Canary in general. So, seeing all the complaints that people are having for Laurel taking up her sister Sara’s mantel as a vigilante doesn’t faze me that much.

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 isn’t 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.

Trouble is brewing in Starling and Central City, and both the Flash and the Arrow are going to need all the help they can get!

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

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

This past week, my friend tested 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 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, 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, 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,” “Dos & Lunes,” “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.

…”Paint me like one of your french girls.” – Gomez

Based off Humans of New York from the NYT. Student Spotlight captures FIU students as their natural self. Ana Arenas, FIUSM Staff. will spotlight a new student every Monday, with a photo and quote that eludes to their personal story and goals.

Do you suffer from recurrent cold sores?

Segal Institute, a research organization, is conducting a clinical research study that will evaluate the effect of an investigational topical cream on cold sores.

To qualify you must:
- Be ages 12 or older
- Have experienced at least three incidences of cold sores per year within the past two years

If qualified, all study related medication and study visits will be provided at no cost to you.

Volunteers will receive compensation up to $650 for their time and travel.

To learn more, call now toll-free
1-877-SEGAL-88
1-877-734-2588
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 seeing senior Josh Anderson and junior Mike Franco continue their path towards the Major Leagues, new players must step up to lead this team to a successful season.

Frens should be used to seeing senior Josh Anderson and sophomore Chris Mowrelle 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 in the conference this year. Last season, Anderson started 306 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 Mowrelle 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 strikeouts which led all rookies as well. Moorelle had pinpoint control as the right hander only allowed 11 walks in 78.1 innings pitched. Moorelle 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.
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 Kaftlin Brozovich were the only doubles team to win for FIU today with a 6-1 win in the No. 3 position. However, just like they did against Liberty last week, FIU was able to rebound and play much better in the singles games. FIU tied the match 1-1 after former No. 5 player Nerma Caluk, the team’s No. 3 player who got the match-clinching victory over Liberty last week, quickly defeated Stetson’s Arijana Korac in straight sets, 6-3, 6-0.

Shortly after Caluk’s win, Carlotta Orlando defeated Isabella Fernandez of Stetson 6-3, 6-1 in the No. 2 position to give the Panthers a 2-1 lead. Carlotta also got a victory against Liberty, so she was in very good spirits after today’s match. “It’s really important for your confidence [to start the season 2-0],” Orlando said. “It definitely gives you a lot more positive for your other matches.”

Orlando, who is second on the team in career singles wins, also touched on today’s match, and how she was able to win in such a convincing outcome. “It’s never easy to win a match,” Orlando said, “but if you don’t complicating it so much on the court [your results] will usually be good.”

Stetson was able to tie the match 2-2 after standout freshman Alizee Michaud defeated FIU’s Yana Koroleva at the No. 1 position 7-6, 6-4. This match stood out as a highlight today, as Michaud and Koroleva went back and forth the entire time. Michaud suffered a lower body injury that appeared to be a knee strain of some sort during the first set, but she was able to power through and defeat FIU’s top singles player.

FIU regained the lead after Kaftlin Brozovich defeated Eveline Lepinay in the No. 5 position 6-4, 7-5. Brozovich was on the losing end of her match against Liberty, so this was a key win not only for FIU to secure a victory against Stetson, but also for Brozovich’s confidence moving forward.

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Petrovic said. “I will continue to change the doubles partners all the time, and we will try to get that point.”

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 to the doubles points,” Petrovic said. “I will continue to change the doubles partners all the time, and we will try to get that point.”

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.

Sophomore Nina Nagode, fought back from a near defeat against Stetson University’s Carlaira Margarrelli 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 Margarrelli 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.”

For the full story go to fiusm.com.
Barreto still helping Florida’s fish, wildlife

STEVE 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, delayed efforts to undermine the state’s 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 consultants 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, a non-profit organization that provides sports equipment for young athletes, 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-terra,” 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 serves 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.

She said it’s a way to promote themselves, but also to 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 FLU Alternative Breaks to help less fortunate in Washington D.C. and participating in FLU 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.”

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Alumnas helps less fortunate in Colombia

Class of 2011 Alumna Natalie Fernandez may have gone to Colombia for a news report, but after meeting a group of underprivileged kids in the coastal city of Barranquilla, her life’s path changed forever.

A sports journalist, Fernandez traveled to the country to meet with a baseball Yankees scout who trains 3 to 18 year old kids who don’t have enough means of their own to play. There, she met five year old Juan who inspired her to start Game Time Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides sports equipment for young athletes.

“I went as a reporter to do a story, but I came out different because the little kid touched my heart — so that’s when I knew,” Fernandez said.

She said he expressed to her how much he loved his coach because of his commitment to the team. Later did she find out that little Juan and his family were provided shelter in the stadium.

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 communications major.

Many of them play baseball on soccer fields.

Fernandez has been featured on NBC 6 and ESPN Deportes in Miami, as well as Caracol Radio and television network Telecaribe in Colombia. The Game Time Foundation also has its own website called gametimefoundation.org to collect funds for new equipment to then send to the kids.

Fernandez also started a campaign called #Athletes4Athletes where MLB Minor League and Major Leagues show their support to the foundation in a video and or photo through its Instagram page @gametimefound.

She said it’s a way to promote themselves, but also to support future generation athletes.

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