Police chief identifies unsafe areas on campus

ARIEL WEINSTEIN
Staff Writer

The University Police Department and Student Government Association led an annual safety walk pointing out campus areas that need safety improvements.

Chief of Police Alexander Casas identified pathways from the Health Center to University Towers and Graham Center areas including the fountain and the walkway. Casas noted that lighting around campus needs improvement.

Casas said the University plans to install bright white lights to replace the current yellow ones.

“The lighting is not only to protect from a mugging, but it is also for students to see where they are walking and what they are doing,” he said.

Walk participants, including SGA President Liane Sippin, met at Bustelo in GC on the evening of Nov. 6.

I am not required to attend these safety walks, but I like to because it is my responsibility to oversee the safety of the students,” Sippin said.

Sippin feels the walks are not only a safety precaution, but also an important maintenance system.

“We like doing these walks and getting things fixed as soon as possible. We don’t want to just say we are going to do them,” Casas said.

UPD and SGA host safety walks each year, but Casas said he wants to start hosting them on a semester basis.

During the walk, Casas and Sippin snapped photos of specific areas in need of maintenance. The chief passed the information on to the facilities for safety improvements.

Casas noted that in addition to safety improvements, some buildings that should be locked at night are not always secure.

Since the safety walks started, he said there have been improvements in lighting, security cameras and call boxes.

According to Casas, the last serious incident at the University occurred three years ago.

TEDxFIU reimagines possible, inspires in second annual event

MARISOL MEDINA
Staff Writer

The second annual TEDxFIU was hosted this past Thursday to an audience of about 500 people who reimagined what they thought was possible.

Spectators of this year’s event cried, laughed and danced as they cheerfully applauded the speakers delivering their talks.

The second TEDxFIU featured 12 speakers — students, faculty and alumni — that delivered 11 talks ranging from topics including Aileen Marty’s talk on using chemical and biological weapons to save lives to Tudor Parfitt, also known as the “British Indiana Jones,” speaking about his search for the lost tribes of Israel.

Aneyi Fernandez energized the crowd during her musical performance with the Wadaiko Academy playing Japanese Taiko drums, and Black Violin closed the night to the beat of hip-hop and classical violin.

“I feel completely inspired,” said Mariana Cuevas, human resources manager and self-proclaimed TED-fanatic.

“The event made me think outside the box and thinking that things are possible,” Cuevas said. “So why not a master’s?”

Cuevas said the event exceeded her expectations and changed her image of the University. She wants to be a future Panther.

Nineteen-year-old Alexa Chavarry, a sophomore in psychology and the youngest speaker in the event, received a standing ovation for sharing how her personal struggles with depression and self-harm that lead to the creation of The Butterfly Project — her online blog of more than 14,000 followers who share their stories and use it as support in avoiding self-harm.

“The standing ovation is one thing, but knowing I was able to put something very taboo out there in such a positive light is very satisfactory,” said Chavarry.

Chavarry said she felt relieved after finishing her talk. She said knowing that people received her message made all her hard work preparing for the event worthwhile.

Kelly Ibarra, sophomore communication arts major, found Maria Pia Celestino’s talk about glasses that help read to the blind inspirational.

“She was able to find something unique to help people who can’t see, it’s something that can help people around the world; it even made me tear up,” said Ibarra.

Ibarra was surprised to see Black Violin offer classical music combined with hip-hop, and said that although she is a lover of both genres, it had never occurred to her to combine them.

“I’m a musician and I understand how hard it can be to have a unique idea, especially with a classical instrument such as the violin, but they were able to think outside the box and succeed with their idea,” said Ibarra.

Ibarra said the speakers in the event inspired her to reach for new heights in her own life as well.

“I left tonight thinking ‘what am I going to do to change the world and inspire people?’”

Deron Burkepile, assistant professor of marine science, and Michael Heithaus, director of the School of Environment, Arts and Society, spoke about the Aquarius reef base, the world’s only undersea research lab.

Burkepile delivered his part of the talk from the Herbert Werteheim Performing Arts Center and Heithaus gave his live underwater
SPC hosts gaming event, extends programming to Engineering Center

Ariel Weinstein
Staff Writer

Hordes of students gathered at the University’s Engineering Center for a fun-filled afternoon of gaming. From students singing and dancing to Rock Band to the FIFA competition, the day was packed with events to keep students entertained all day. "Our primary goal tonight was to make people understand how important Aquarius is to understanding coral reefs, how they're threatened and how they can be protected," said Burkepile.

Burkepile said that one of the best things about the event was that it offered a great variety of ideas and performances that made people think about things they had never thought about before.

"When I go around the country, I see that people may not know FIIU, but when I come here, they are impressed with the technology." Burkepile said. "We want to expose our students to new designs and new ways of thinking." Burkepile was impressed by the variety of events that took place throughout the day.

"It’s more of an interest to the students who are here every day to miss out on all of the events at MMC," said Claudia Yaranga, a biology major that works with SPC.

SPC sponsored a gaming event on Nov. 7 for engineering students in the EC pit. The event was designed to introduce engineering students to different games for students to play for free, offering a break between classes and studying.

Yaranga said SPC specifically chose the gaming event for the engineering students.

"It’s more of an interest to the students at the Engineering Center because they're the ones creating the code," Yaranga said. "They're learning about this and we wanted this event to be relevant to the computerized and technical courses provided here."

Fernando Lopez, senior mechanical engineering major, said the event was a perfect way to take everyone's minds off work for a while. "I used to be a gamer until homework and studying dominated." Lopez said. "This event is very special to us. It’s very appropriate because I guess we are all kind of nerdy gamers. It’s appropriate for this crowd."
Don’t feel inclined to define yourself

IAN VASQUEZ
Contributing Writer

There are many times in your life where someone will ask you to define who you are.

I despise that question.

People have been trying to classify and categorize others for as long as they’ve existed and I have come to the conclusion that the aforementioned question is just another one of those methods.

What do you do? Who are you? And is anyone ever expected to really know that answer? What’s their criterion for defining “you” or a person? How does that question cater to the little differences between everyone?

How do they account for the tiny subtle differences that affect everything from how you wake up in the morning to how you decide whether something is right or wrong.

That are the same point of view on a social variety of issues with other people, but it doesn’t mean I reached my conclusions exactly the same way as them.

But I think what really bothers me the most about the question is that it tries to lock you into being somebody.

I know that sounds weird, but bear with me.

But I think what really bothers me the most about the question is that it tries to lock you into being somebody.

I know that sounds weird, but bear with me.

You know who you are; you’re in your own head, and you know your thoughts, what you love, what you hate. It seems like a joke when it is asked, but it’s incredibly hard for anyone to answer, and if you can answer without hesitation, then you might have a problem.

If you start to look at who you are, it seems impossible to really analyze it, because you begin to wonder why: You

But I think what really bothers me the most about the question is that it tries to lock you into being somebody.

Don’t feel inclined to define yourself

JAIRO RAMOS
Contributing Writer

Recent years have seen card partnerships between universities and banks proliferate exponentially throughout the United States– an issue that, of course, has failed to escape controversy.

In 2012, a year after FIU first announced its affiliation with Wells Fargo, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group published “The Campus Debit Card Trap” – a report that exposed the underhandedness of this system.

Who are your friends? Those people that you spend the entire day with. Those people that you consider a part of who you are.

But I think what really bothers me the most about the question is that it tries to lock you into being somebody.

One Card to the shredder, let us ask why you think the way you do, why you act the way you do. And I’m willing to bet that if anyone did this, right now even, something in them would change.

If you truly look inwards and question yourself, you might find things you want to change, or things you want to adapt to different situations.

Hell, you might find the way you hold forks strongly upsets you.

But I think what really bothers me the most about the question is that it tries to lock you into being somebody.

But does this mean that the question, then, becomes about how trustworthy a bank card is? Is it possible to define anything as trustworthy?

That is where we need your FIU One Card to the shredder, let us make a key distinction.

When it comes to providing on-campus banking services, the field is made up of two types of players: Traditional Banks – the names you would typically see in the news, and Non-Traditional Financial Firms – institutions that provide banking programs exclusively for university partners. And these differ significantly.

Non-Traditional Firms, such as Sallie Mae or Higher One, base their income only off their college accounts and campus credit card operations, and;

its revenue (over $150 million) last year from “account fees” imposed on students. These included non-sufficient fund fees, overdraft fees, ATM fees and inactivity fees among others: a large portion of which were drawn from federal financial aid money.

Fortunately, the situation on FIU’s side of the spectrum is much less worrisome. In contrast to the above mentioned firms, Traditional Banks such as Wells Fargo, the local partner of FIU has failed to escape controversy.

But does this mean that the system at FIU is flawless? Not quite.

Though partnerships with Traditional Banks pose a much friendlier model, they do not come without their own set of complications. For starters, one can argue that by restricting any form of on-campus presence from rival organizations, universities create a monopolistic-type market: less alternatives, no competition, less pressure. But the matter reaches even deeper.

Consider the ethical role of a school as source of guidance – an emblem of trust. When a university establishes a partnership with another institution it – explicitly or not – mandates an endorsement of it. And such stamp of approval can lead unwary students into a product they do not want, or even worse a product they do not need. A selection of banks is more likely to appear trustworthy to an FIU undergrad if Roary the Panther’s face garnishes the back of the corresponding card - a bank will tend to seem more inviting if its doors open up on the side of a familiar campus building.

The question, then, becomes less about whether students are being offered satisfactory services, and more about whether they are being allowed to judge those services from an uninfluenced standpoint. Are their faces being turned in a particular direction? Are they being exposed to the entire array of options?

And most importantly: are they being taught to decide, or being decided for?

On-campus banking: the bad and the not-so-bad

New jogging trail: a step toward being fit

For years, students on campus who wanted to get in a good run had to either go to the gym or go around the perimeter of campus.

But now, finally, students will have access to a jogging path that goes through the Nature Preserve.

The 0.6 mile path, which will run along the edge of the Nature Preserve and feature various workout stations throughout, will give students a great alternative for a workout in the fresh air of Miami.

We are very excited and enthused that the University is giving students this new feature to help maintain fitness.

This project is especially beneficial to Housing students who want to get in a workout and not be stuck inside of the jammed up gym where there isn’t a lot space for things.

It is also on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus that is considered one of the only eco-friendly spaces because of the campus size and amount of buildings.

The next step is to find a place for the track team to train where they don’t have to go to Miramar to host a Conference Tourna-

me like last year.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

The Beacon welcomes your letters regarding any topic. Send them to opinion@fiusm.com.


disclaimer

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University student is Worlds Ahead with her first published book

LIFE! ZUMBA CONQUERS THE GYM

Dapper and dandy: Pelaez keeps the 70s alive

COLUMNS

In my year and half of photographing students on campus, senior anthropology major Keysel Pelaez has easily been my most photographed subject. I first met Keysel when I saw him walking in front of the Green Library wearing a vintage Koolaid blue shirt and red plaid wool bell bottoms with leather Chukka boots. Even if I hadn’t noticed his outfit, his massive afro is impossible to miss, almost taking on a personality of its own. Since then every time I run into him he never fails to make a huge, afro-waving, bell-bottomed entrance.

I’m often approached about it and I really enjoy it because it really works as an icebreaker. Even the people that approach me negatively, like I’ve been told I’m weird and I enjoy that too because it is still an icebreaker and I like embracing the negative and the positive because that is how this world works.

The first thing someone sees is what you present on the outside and that is why I’m so invested in my appearance. My value system is presentation.

I don’t think I’ve ever seen you around without at least one piece of thrifted clothing on. What got you interested in vintage clothing?

A sort of respect for the old. The fact that I’ve always been into history to a lot to do with it and that I think we can learn from our past and fashion is not different from that. We always build on ideas and fashion does the same thing.

I got really into it by reading. Author Evelyn Waugh definitely has influenced me and he had this sort of Oxford England 1920s fashion thing going on that I love. Oh, and German literature, I’ve always enjoyed the Empirical fashion. There are things you can take from that, the feeling, the attitude. It’s the sense of looking good all the time, dandyism. They all had their presentation and I try to maintain good material in my clothing like cool pants, leather shoes. I don’t like mass produced cookie-cutter fashion, I don’t want to look mass-produced. And that even goes into my car, a 1972 Beatle. Essentially I want to be simple, trying without trying.

Do you believe there is such a thing as good taste and bad taste?

I think everything has its place. How you go about it is a question of tact and I think there are things that can be tactless.

Do you have a favorite art movement?

An art Nouveau because it’s about the natural touch of embellishment and extravagant movement that heightens Epicureanism, going ahead and redeeming it with natural qualities is really beautiful to me. Like humanity and nature can exist together and still have fun.

If you could live anywhere at any time where and when would it be?

The Himalayas because it has changed so little in the time that it’s been. I’ve always enjoyed the Buddhist value system and sometimes I need to get away from it all and I feel like the Himalayas are a place I could live forever.

What do you think the difference is between fashion and style?

Fashion would be more like the specific clothing that there is and style is how you put it together. I think everyone has style because it is just about where their values are placed.

Do you think style is an art?

Yes, definitely. Anything that is touched by human hands is an art.

ashley.garner@fiusm.com

You are very well recognized on campus for your style. Do you get approached often about this or do you feel that people are afraid to talk to you?

As the semester comes to an end, students can take advantage of their free time and pick up a good book to read.

Specifically, Wes L. Lotus’ recently published book, “Bare,” Wes L. Lotus, a junior broadcast journalism major, had her first book released in mid-October on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. In a few weeks, it will be available on all major independent book sites. “Bare” bares it all with Lotus’ poems about love, wisdom and how to obtain a better life.

Each chapter discusses something a little different, which Lotus shares.

“The first book is in my book that’s called ‘History Lens’… It kind of touches up on my Haitian culture a bit and half of my most photographed subject.

I got really into it by reading. A sort of respect for the old. I think everything has its place. How you go about it is a question of tact and I think there are things that can be tactless.

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Broken Bat: “Batman Arkham Origins” review

LUIS BOLANOS
COLUMNIST

LIFE! The Beacon – Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Following the popular “Arkham” series of Batman video games, was developed by a new team at Warner Bros. Montreal instead of Rocksteady, who had helmed “Arkham Asylum” and “Arkham City.” “Origins” is an ambitious, but flawed prequel that attempts to deliver an experience on par with Rocksteady’s titles but doesn’t live up to the quality.

The basic premise of “Origins” involves a plot where Batman must find and stop eight assassins hired by Black Mask. This isn’t really immediate like the events of “Asylum” or “City,” thus the first chunk of the story plays along as Batman punches criminals in the face without an engaging plot until the midpoint of the game. While eight assassins may seem intimidating to a normal person, it’s a cakewalk for Batman. The story plays the “he’s a normal person, it’s a cakewalk for him” variation due to the greater focus on combat.

“Origins” takes place when Bruce Wayne has introduced the Batman character to Gotham and we’re already familiar with the characters and we don’t really gain anything new from the story or characters, this impacts those that are already familiar with Batman lore the most.

Story issues aside, the gameplay has some balance issues in terms of what the game offers players. The game has a greater focus on combat than the exploration and puzzles of the previous games. Because of this focus, combat is enjoyable, but when compared to the other things that make up a successful Batman game as seen in the previous games, “Origins” feels one-sided.

The decision to focus on combat makes me feel that WB Montreal didn’t have time to come up with good puzzles or missions like those in the previous titles. While there are Riddler puzzles in the overworld, those puzzles aren’t particularly satisfying. There’s also a lack of Riddler’s challenge rooms introduced in Arkham City. I feel bad for any completionists looking forward to more challenge rooms or good puzzles, because they’re just not enjoyable.

The main story missions have few variation due to the greater focus on combat, and the side missions are a mixed bag. The “Crime Scene” side missions are essentially glorified cutscenes as they walk you through solving a crime scene step by step without any sense of reward, and some of the side villains have lame side mission arcs that usually include beating up a couple of goons (there’s that emphasis of combat again!).

There are some stand out missions, like ones involving The Mad Hatter, and Deadshot: missions that actually change the game’s mechanics. These missions make me wish there was more variation and creativity throughout the game, especially in the first half of the story missions.

The Gotham in “Origins” doesn’t really feel different from “Arkham City” either. After gliding around and traversing the city, “Origins” Gotham is very familiar to “Arkham City” in some aspects, as some locations make a return. The lack of variation makes the overworld environment boring, especially if you’re someone that already spent hours exploring Arkham City. The weather doesn’t help either, as Gotham lacks the color splashes amidst the gothic architecture Arkham City had.

During my time in “Arkham Origins” on the PC, I encountered several bugs, and one which prevented me from solving an Enigma Radio tower puzzle. This bug prevented me from fast traveling to one of the locations on the map throughout my playthrough. These bugs range from middling to frustrating, especially those that end up forcing you to go back to a checkpoint making you repeat your progress again.

It’s clear that the game needed a little more work to be as polished as “Asylum” and “City.” Unfortunately, the overall game suffers due to these bugs that make you wonder if the Riddler or Scarecrow had any involvement in making these bugs in “Origins.”

Some of the bugs and glitches are funny however, like punching thugs and making them fly out of Gotham like a speeding bullet. Becoming one with a roulette table was also amusing, along with watching the AI scramble attempting to fight me while I assimilated with the roulette table.

After playing through the single player and completing every side mission except for the Riddler puzzles, I dove into the new multiplayer mode.

This new multiplayer mode was developed externally by Splash Damage, known for their success of “Enemy Territory” series and their failure in “Brink.” The multiplayer features one mode that pits three elite Joker thugs against three elite Bane thugs against Batman and Robin. Joker and Bane also show up during a game and are used during the match as well, but only one of the super villains will show up during a match. It’s a creative asymmetric multiplayer mode. I enjoyed grabbing the thugs as Batman and silently taking out team leaders to gain points. I wanted to like the multiplayer, but the bugs and technical issues made it difficult to fully enjoy the multiplayer.

A friend of mine that played the multiplayer had all his stats and progress erased after spending an hour and 30 minutes playing. There’s some lag issues, and at times the controls don’t quite work as you intend them to. When playing as an elite thug, it doesn’t feel as tight as other third person shooters. It’s hard to enjoy this experience because of these problems, which is a shame, because of the creative system set up by Splash Damage.

A couple of patches have been released since launch, but upon going on several online forums and testing out the game again, “Arkham Origins” still seems broken in the single player and the multiplayer.

Read the verdict at fiusm.com
While other sports falter, basketball shows promise

The women’s team, led by senior Jerica Coley, made their second-consecutive trip to the Women’s National Invitation Tournament after posting a 19-13 record. The men, led by senior Tynell Murphy, finished 18-14 and were three points shy of their first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 1995. So these two teams win, and that alone should entice fans to go watch. But if they need a little more convincing, I can provide that, as well.

Coley is a reigning two-time All-American and Conference Player of the Year in the Sun Belt Conference, and has already been voted the Preseason Conference Player of the Year in Conference USA without having played a minute in C-USA.

The All-American has also been honored with multiple awards in this offseason. Coley has been recognized as one of 60 men’s and women’s basketball student-athletes who prosper both on and off the court by being named a candidate for the Senior CLASS award. The standout was also named a Wade Watch honoree and was named to the John R. Wooden Top 30 List.

Now for the men. Murphy is coming off a very successful season in which he averaged 14.6 points per game while snatching down 6.8 rebounds per contest. Last season, Murphy started all but one of the Panthers’ 32 games and shot a team-best 57 percent from the field. His consistent play earned him a First-Team All-Sun Belt Conference selection.

Like Coley, Murphy received some preseason recognition from the coaches in C-USA. The senior was selected as one of the 16 Preseason Players to Watch for the upcoming season.

Both basketball teams will provide plenty of things to watch out for this season. Coley and her squad are looking to get past the WNIIT and earn a berth into the NCAA Tournament. Coley’s trek for her first bid into the “Big Dance” should be nothing less than epic. While Murphy will need to get better but also improve his consistency, the Panthers will want to face off against Murphy and a team with absolutely nothing to lose.

“They’re not exciting and they don’t win,” is what a lot of fans use as excuses when watching basketball here at FIU. But those excuses won’t come in the basketball season up upon us.

Run club sprinting in the right direction at FIU

PATRICK CHALVIRE  Staff Writer

What started as a way to exercise outside a gym has been the new trend on campus.

David Alvarez and Michael Caballero have been busy since the Spring of 2012 adding to improve their run club, but turnout has amazed them.

“We’ve grown a lot,” Alvarez said. “The biggest thing is just consistency. Having a solid group every time we come out and we’ve had a really good base of people that have come since the beginning of the semester and it’s been growing ever since.”

For Alvarez and Caballero, it started as an idea of bringing others together, but that idea has since become a reality they never expected.

“It’s been great,” Caballero said. “The whole vision in the beginning, when we started, was to try to build something that could get the whole FIU community involved, students and non-students alike, and I think we’ve seen a transition towards realizing that goal, that vision.”

In most gyms and workout sessions, working out in groups doesn’t tend to fit well for others, but for this club, forming friendships matter.

Graduate student and veteran runner Rhett Williamson enjoys the friendly competition.

“Having people that I can socially run with but also challenge me because there’s really fast guys here,” Williamson said. “It’s nice to run with other people who are pushing me to get better. It’s also a good motivation for other people. It’s a feedback loop, we motivate each other to keep in shape and keep running.”

The club has also added the support of several local and big name sponsorships to support the club and bring in new faces.

“We’re always trying to bring in new sponsors and new vendors to give out free stuff,” Caballero said. “We have Muscle Milk involved now. KIND Snacks has been kind to us and given US a lot of free stuff as well and SoleRUNNERS, without questions, has been our biggest supporter.”

Though they are a club by university standards, Alvarez and Caballero try to stay away from the club mentality, rather, a community with its own goals and aspirations.

“I know it’s called FIU Run Club, it’s considered a club and registra,” Caballero said. “It’s more of just a community within a community, with a goal of just bringing everyone together and as many people as possible on a weekly basis.”

The club hasn’t just gotten the community involved, but it has also given several people the opportunity to compete in different races and marathons that have been going on throughout the Magic City.

Both Alvarez and Caballero are expected to graduate within the next few months and even though they plan to keep their pres-ence with the club, concern as to who will take over this growing club has come up.

Though the club has been a great success for both men, they both agree that when the time comes, they will have to untie their shoes and hand the baton over to a new generation of run lovers.

“We have a lot of people that have been with us for a while now and they’ve seen the whole thing and they’ve seen the whole project as we do and see the whole point behind it,” Caballero said. “That’s the student club side of the whole thing, that’s the beauty, the club will continue once we’re gone.”

“Hopefully we can come back years down the road and join them for a run every now and then.”

TUESDAY, November 13, 2013

fiusm.com

Sports

The Beacon – 6

SPORTS

By now, most FIU fans have gotten weary of the perfor-

mance put forth by their football team. The few that attend the games are becoming less supportive of a losing team.

Well, rest assured because we have gotten to basketball season here at FIU as both the men and women started their seasons on Friday, Nov. 8, and that means we will be given two teams that will win plenty of games and give you even more reasons to stick around to watch them play.

Fans, you won’t be able to make the “they don’t win, so I don’t watch excuse,” to make the “they don’t win, I can provide that, as well.”

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“They’re not exciting and they don’t win,” is what a lot of fans use as excuses when watching basketball here at FIU. But those excuses won’t come in the basketball season up upon us.
Standing ovation needed for women’s soccer

After the dust had settled on a 4-1 loss to the University of North Texas, the Panthers should search for perspective. No one on this team should or is content with a first round exit, but it’s a miracle that they got there to begin. After a loss to Charlotte University in late Sept., the Panthers fell to a lowly 2-7-0 record. That was it. It was over, the season was over. They were failures. But no, they got up and like the prototypical American sports triumph story, they fought. They fought to an upset win against conference leading University of Alabama at Birmingham, they fought to close the season 5-3-0, and they fought to a number one seed in the conference for the majority of their run.

It wasn’t until the regular season finale against Marshall University that they relinquished their top spot in the eastern division of Conference-USA. Sometimes words don’t give moments justice. It’s why we have music, art, dance and even sports.

They take the words right out of your mouth and give it life, give it true expression.

Watching the Panther team go from nothing to something is certainly something you had to see to feel. And then it all culminated in Houston, Texas with the C-USA championship tournament. The Panthers faced the most explosive offense in C-USA, leading nearly every statistical offensive category. They might have been in over their heads.

When the Mean Green took a 2-0 in the minute 36, again all seemed lost. All seemed over, then 20 minutes later, FIU scores. We’re back on. With a 2-1 score and all the momentum going the Panthers way, it surely felt it was a microcosm of their roller coaster season. When all doubted, when it seemed hopeless, they found a way. Only this time, North Texas shut the door on any story book ending. They answered with two goals in the final minutes of the game, and that was it.

FIU’s magic had run out and allowed four goals to the most potent offensive team in the conference. Finally something in the Panthers season made sense. It just came at the worst time.

“They were a special group,” said Head Coach Thomas Chestnutt. “We had a lot of success with them and I know they’ll do great things in the future.”

It was a special group indeed, and one that should be celebrated despite a loss. In sports often times do we look at what went wrong instead of what went right. It’s easy to point to the season finale against Marshall and criticize the Panthers for not winning a game they needed to have an automatic berth to the second round of the tournament. Or to spend the offseason questioning the drastic move at goal keeper from stud redshirt junior Paula Zuluaga, which Chestnutt declined to comment on.

These women deserve a standing ovation for all they did right. It’s what America loves, an underdog success story. The tale of a group of girls who didn’t quit, who never faltered, and that learned from their past failures. It should be noted that after the loss to Charlotte, FIU drastically boosted all the stats they were bad at. Scoring which was 2.2 goals in their final eight games, and defense with only allowing 1.5 goals in their final eight games.

As the Panthers take the long flight back to South Florida from Texas they should be celebrating. For a season that almost never was. For the senior class that had the third-winningest run in the history of FIU women’s soccer with 42 wins and for the story they wrote.

They gave meaning and expression to the thousands of words written about them by only kicking a soccer ball. It’s extraordinary. And as the curtain falls on the improbable season of the FIU women’s soccer team, we should all rise and give them the standing ovation they deserve.

-sports@fiusm.com
University to offer new, improved emergency alert system by end of month

MARIA BRITOS
Staff Writer

Students, faculty and staff received an alert text message from the University-Wide Test FIU Alert on Oct. 31 as part of the new updated emergency notification system operated by FIU Alert.

As part of the new update, the system will “allow for the integration of the separate communication platforms to allow for a more efficient, faster and automated activation,” according to Amy Aikens, director of the Department of Emergency Management.

The testing period will last about two weeks and is scheduled to be fully activated by the end of November 2013.

“It’s the first time I get this type of notification,” said Roberta Duarte, a freshmen Hospitality major. “I hope it works well when there is actually an emergency.”

Apart from the text message alerts, FIU Alert will include notifications via the FIU email, social media such as Twitter and Facebook through the official University accounts, voice calls to subscribed users, outdoor speakers that will be played throughout campus, FIU Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Phones that will play the emergency message through its speakers and all Emergency call boxes around every campus.

After the first set of testing, the Department of Emergency Management has seen significant amount of improvement, especially with a faster performance of the text messages.

“The ability to activate all the different communication platforms from a single system makes the system much easier to activate during an emergency situation and the recent test proved the system could accomplish the task,” said Aikens.

According to the online survey available as part of the first testing phase, out of 3,195 respondents; only 3 percent did not receive an alert, but 81 percent received alerts within 5 minutes of it being sent and 92 percent were notified within 30 minutes.

“I like the whole texting alert system because if there’s an emergency I will be able to know right away,” said Hugo Mujica, a junior biology major.

With the recent increase of crimes such as the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary and the Colorado movie theater, “these types of emergency situations is what necessitates the system to be more flexible and as fast as possible in warning the FIU community,” said Aikens.

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The update has been a strategic initiative since the summer of 2012 through a developing project since the University leadership. Future plans, according to Aikens, are underway and will include even alerts to personal computers.

For the notification alerts to function properly and to reach to the entire University community, everyone is encouraged to sign up through the Department of Emergency Management’s website and stay connected via social media, email and the FIU main website. Although individual have an option to opt out of the alert system, FIU Alert highly recommends to remain subscribed to the system.

To have your event featured, email us at calendar@fiusm.com